



FLATS BACKED DESPITE CONCERN

Report by David Cosgrove

CONTROVERSIAL plans to re-develop derelict former council offices to create apartments and a cafe are set to get the green light – despite more than a thousand people opposing the scheme.

The Grade-II listed buildings in Great Cornbow and Hagley Street in Halesowen are proposed for a transformation into 24 apartments, a cafe and orangery under the proposals.

Plans would also see the former landmark James Hobbs hardware shop refurbished as part of the project.

Twenty-one letters of objection have been sent to Dudley Council, as well as two petitions with a total of 1,060 signatures.

However, the scheme has been recommended for approval by planning officers.

They claim it would revamp Halesowen town centre and 'provides a long-term sustainable future for a number of listed buildings'.

Council officers added that the development is considered appropriate from an amenity and highway safety point of view.

A report on the objections states they were received following consultation with 38 neighbours, the posting of a site notice and the publication of a newspaper advert.

Issues

"Main issues raised were – enough cafes/food outlets in town centre; additional competition for existing cafes/food outlets; too many charity shops in the town; need for better shops in town," stated the report.

Recommending the scheme for approval, council officers wrote: "The proposed development is considered to be acceptable in principle and is welcomed in that it provides a long-term sustainable future for a number of listed buildings."

"The development is also considered appropriate from an amenity and highway safety point of view."

The council's planning committee will rule on the plans at their next meeting, later this month.

Meanwhile, homes are to be built on the former site of a gas works in Lower Gornal after plans were given the go-ahead by Dudley Council. Ten homes will be built on the site of the old Musk Lane Works on Brook Street. The land has become overgrown since the demolition of the gas works, which had stood since the 1860s.

● Building demolition shock – see page 3

FLYING OUR FLAG FOR BLACK COUNTRY DAY



Festival organiser Steve Edwards, Dudley Council leader Patrick Harley, Derek Groves and Mike Jones celebrate at Dudley Market

FLY your Black Country flags with pride – that is the message from council chiefs and community leaders ahead of Black Country Day tomorrow (Friday).

People have been encouraged to show their support for the region as its day of celebration approaches and the accompanying festival becomes bigger and better.

The Black Country Festival has grown massively since it was first launched four years ago.

Dudley Council leader Patrick Harley said: "It's really fantastic to see how this has

grown. It started out as an idea and to see it grow into such a spectacular celebration is great."

"The Black Country Festival is getting bigger and bigger every year."

"From our point of view Dudley is the historic capital of the Black Country and so we love celebrating the history and heritage."

"But it is also great to get the community involved."

"We've got a great past and we should celebrate that – but the support for the festival shows we've also got a very bright future."

Festival founder Steve Edwards said: "The support we've had has been absolutely fantastic."

"Everybody is so proud to be from the Black Country and that shows why the flag is the second best seller behind the Union Jack – which is amazing."

"I would never have thought we would get so big as it's got."

"I think it's going to keep growing and growing in the future. It's getting bigger and better and I think it will continue to do so."

● Celebration time – see page 2

CRIME

Teen in court after Merry Hill stabbing

A TEENAGER has appeared in court over a stabbing at the Merry Hill shopping centre.

The victim, a 19-year-old man, was treated in hospital after being attacked at around 11.15am on Saturday.

Ronan Parker, aged 19, appeared at Dudley Magistrates' Court on Monday charged with wounding with intent.

Parker, of Dixons Green Road, Dudley, spoke to confirm his name and address. He did not enter a plea.

He was remanded in custody and is due to appear next at Wolverhampton Crown Court on August 7.

The victim is now in a stable condition in hospital.

FATAL

Police name man stabbed to death

A 22-year-old man who died from a single stab wound has been named by police.

Alexander Phillip Leonard died after he was attacked in Woodgate Gardens, Bartley Green, at around 10.50pm on Monday.

Officers arrested an 18-year-old man in connection with the death on Wednesday afternoon on suspicion of murder.

POLICE

Victim is seriously injured in shooting

A MAN was left seriously injured when he was shot in an attack near Halesowen.

Detectives launched an investigation after a man was shot in Quinton at around 6.30pm on Sunday. Police said the 26-year-old victim remains in a serious but stable condition in hospital.

An investigation is under way into the shooting at Bourne Green.

INSIDE

IN THE PINK AT RACE FOR LIFE



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Celebrating very best of the Black Country

A BOSTIN' weekend is lined up as communities come together to celebrate Black Country Day.

Tomorrow, Friday, is the official Black Country Day but events are taking place throughout the month of July to mark the occasion.

The day always falls on July 14, to mark the anniversary of the invention of the Newcomen Engine – the first to harness the power of steam.

But the event has proved so popular that it has now become a month-long series of events and it is backed by all four Black Country councils – Dudley, Sandwell, Wolverhampton and Walsall.

A VIP guest helped kick off the activities at the Black Country Living Museum at the weekend – the man credited with creating the Black Country.

Lord William Ward, the 1st Earl of Dudley, brought the industrial revolution to the area, opening mines and furnaces in Dudley and Bilston, employing hundreds of men.

Opposite

He opened an asylum for workers who had been blinded, before it was turned into the Guest Hospital, which was situated opposite the museum in Dudley.

Lord Ward, played by Nigel Westwood-Burgess, was at the Black Country Living Museum on Saturday along with his wife, Countess of Dudley, Lady Georgina, alias Michelle Darby.

At the museum over the weekend Black Country trail was held to take visitors around the attractions as well as meeting some its characters.

The event, called the Black Country Weekend, was a taster for Black Country Day. Also over the weekend was Street Food Affair in Stourbridge on Friday night followed by fun days at Netherton Park and Upper Gornal.

Mr Westwood-Burgess said: "I think it is important to celebrate the day because it is a time of great invention and industry for this area. It is so rich in heritage I think we should tell everyone about it and be proud of it."

He added: "Without Lord Ward we would not have had the industrial revolution in this year. He started most of the mines and furnaces – without him there would not have been a red sky at night."

The museum's poet in residence, Dave Reeves ran a workshop outside the Women's Institute where he turned people's descriptions of the area into rhymes and verses in the Black Country dialect. One read



Deputy mayor of Dudley Alan Taylor, deputy mayoress of Dudley Win Taylor, shop manager Steve Edwards, and Mike Wood MP, outside The Black Country Hub in Merry Hill shopping centre



Black Country Living Museum's poet in residence, David Reeves, outside the Worker's Institute at the museum



'Lord and Lady Dudley' played by Nigel Westwood-Burgess and Michelle Darby, with Danny the horse

Guide to speaking the dialect

Bostin' – brilliant or excellent
Wench – a girl or young woman
Donnies – your hands
Fittle – food, eg 'bostin' fittle'
Yampy – daft or mad
A Piecey – bread and butter
A Cob – a bread roll
A cob on – in a mood

Snap – food or a meal
The Cut – the Canal
Half-soaked – slow-witted
The fizzog – the face
'Ta-ra a bit – see you later

Compiled by Only Way is Dudley community Facebook page

'hard work from money to light, the smell of beer and cod, a scratchin's not something you to an itch, a crusty cob's not a swan it's a roll'. He said: "We should celebrate our dialect, it is something to be proud of."

The showpiece event of the festival is a comedy show with TV's Ross Noble headlining at Brierley Hill Civic

Hall tomorrow (Friday). The supporting acts on the night are all from the Black Country. There is also a Black Country Variety Night taking place at Great Bridge library tomorrow including comedy, music and poetry.

Dudley and Old Hill will be throwing fun days on Saturday as part of the festival while the Wolverhampton

Fiesta will be held at West Park all weekend. The Old Post Office in Wednesbury has live music all day on Saturday.

Last week an information centre was officially launched at Merry Hill shopping centre to promote the region's tourism.

Located near the bus station, the Black Country Hub was opened by the Black Country Arts Council and dignitaries from Dudley Council and Dudley South MP Mike Wood.

Mr Wood said: "We are really proud of our industrial heritage in the Black Country. The launch of the hub and the festival celebrates that, there is real focus, not just on the festival, but going forward in the future."

For details, visit <http://black-country-festival.co.uk/whats-on>

Closure of hospital to affect care for elderly

A HOSPITAL treating people for psychological problems and dementia has been earmarked for closure.

Birch Day Hospital, based in the grounds of Russells Hall Hospital in Dudley, will close under plans which are to be considered after consultation ends today (Thursday).

Dudley Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) bosses want the care to be carried out in the community, rather than the hospital setting.

It comes as the group is also conducting a review in to services which are no longer 'value for taxpayers money', with it needing to save £14 million this financial year.

Dudley and Walsall Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust is working in partnership with the CCG on the consultation for the hospital closure.

A spokesman said: "We are, together with our local health partner, Dudley Clinical Commissioning Group, looking at ways we can improve the services we offer to patients and bring care closer to home."

"The proposal to close Birch Day Hospital outlines alternative options for how we deliver our services including the introduction of an older adult mental health home treatment service. This will bring care closer to home and potentially mean assessment, support and treatment for mental health patients."

Under the proposal, patients of the hospital will be consulted on their future care. It also says there would be more money spent on mental health treatments in the home such as therapeutic sessions.

One person, who did not want to be named, said: "The closure of this centre will leave elderly mentally ill patients vulnerable."

Popular soul night making a return

ULTIMATE and Dudley CVS Charity have combined to bring The Ultimate Soul and Motown Night back to Brierley Hill Civic on Saturday, following on from a successful night in March.

Ultimate's DJ for the evening is Big Reg who is looking forward again to a great night. "These nights, I love DJ-ing, as we stick to the really popular soul and Motown tracks for most of the night. As this is what most people know, love and request, there is also a few northern soul tracks dropped in. We have a couple more planned later in the year and it is one of the few events that you get the music and old soul videos played at the same time."

Tickets are £5 in advance from www.ticketsource.co.uk or £6 on the door from 8pm.

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Guard 'left to die' is now on road to recovery

THE family of a factory security guard bludgeoned with a shovel by a burglar say they want closure on the incident.

Joginder Mattu, aged 73, was so badly injured following the attack at Stoke Forgings in Brierley Hill he was left in a coma.

His attacker, Lee Parsons, 45, of Highgate Road, Holly Hall, Dudley, was jailed for 14 years at Wolverhampton Crown Court on Thursday.

Parsons had pleaded guilty to attempted murder and burglary at the factory in Vine Street.

The court heard how the attack lasted 17 minutes and at one point Parsons knelt to say something in the ear of the defenceless pensioner.

Mr Mattu suffered a bleed to the brain, fractures to the face and head wounds. Yet despite the week in a coma following the attack on March 19, Mr Mattu has made a remarkable recovery.

Retirement

In a statement the family said: "Dad is recovering at home and as a family we would like to draw closure on this incident; we just want to give dad time to recuperate with his family, hopefully make a full recovery and for him to enjoy his retirement."

Detective Constable Paul Widdall said: "I am pleased the court recognised the severity of the assault and handed down a lengthy prison sentence.

"Parsons is clearly a danger to the public and people are safer with him behind bars.

"Mr Mattu has shown great courage and a fantastic mind-set. In fact, when he came around in hospital the first thing he wanted to know was if anything had been stolen and when told no replied 'I did my job then!'

Judge James Burbidge QC told Parsons: "You showed him no mercy. You bludgeoned him and left him in a pool of blood to die."

Official breaks leg

A FRIENDLY between Halesowen Town and Redditch United was abandoned after 20 minutes when a referee's assistant broke a leg. It was reported that a spectator passed out due to the extent of the injury.

Library craft fair

A SUMMER craft fair will be taking place at Halesowen Library on Saturday from noon to 2pm with a range of handmade items for sale. It will take place at level 7 Caslon Hall. For more information call (01384) 812980.

Holidaymakers get virtual reality preview



Get a view of your resort via VR headsets

Holiday hunters can get a real taste of their chosen resort with a virtual trip thanks to the latest technology on offer at a Dudley travel agents.

Thomson has opened a new flagship store at INTU Merry Hill which has such features as virtual reality headsets to bring the holiday to life for its customers in store.

In a first for Thomson, visitors to the store will be able to immerse themselves in a range of 'taster' experiences, such as a trip onboard the TUI Discovery cruise or viewing premium seats on 787 Dreamliners.

There are digital interactive maps to help customers search for and narrow down their holiday choices, showcasing in-depth information on destinations and videos of resorts and hotels.

Within the new store customers can also use dedicated self-service computers to print boarding passes, do advanced passenger information and to pay off any balances with the team of retail advisors on hand to answer questions and provide expert knowledge.

A new appointment reservation

system will also make its debut at the store in Merry Hill, which officially opened at the weekend.

And a currency ATM dispensing stocking Euros and Dollars will enable customers to withdraw their own travel money.

Helen Caron, Distribution and Cruise director for TUI UK & I said: "We're delighted to be able to offer a new and improved store to help our agents provide a state-of-the-art booking service to our customers. This flagship store launch underlines our commitment to retail."

Anger over plans to demolish town building

A PROMINENT town centre building which is home to a gym, martial arts club, taxi company and tyre garage is to be demolished.

Businesses at Pioneer House, in Halesowen, were informed by their landlord they may have to leave the premises in less than three months.

It could be knocked down as soon as October, according to proposals lodged with council planners on June 30.

One business owner, who did not wish to be named, said he was gutted at the decision.

He said: "We have been left in the dark - our organisation is at the heart of the community and this has come out of the blue. We are gutted.

"It is unreasonable to be given such short notice and tell us to get out.

"This building is well known in Halesowen," he added.

Landlord Khosrow Omidvar said all the businesses had been aware that plans could go forward for demolition at any time.

Levelled

He said he had yet to decide how the site would be used once the building was levelled.

He explained: "In our tenancy agreement we had provisions for development and demolition to give notice to tenants and most of their tenancy agreements are short-term anyway.

"At this point I am looking into giving them more time to move out and find alternative facilities. I want to work with them and accommodate them as best as possible."

The building is currently home to KMM Tyres, APT Health and Fitness, Gracie Barra Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu and Star Taxis. It was best known for housing Halesowen Sports Club until a fire forced it to move last year.

It sits next to one of the town centre's largest car parks and Benjamin's Banqueting Suite.

Halesowen north ward councillor Stuart Henley said he was disappointed.

"Such a decision should have been discussed with the businesses first," he said.

Sir Lenny backs city graduates



Chancellor Sir Lenny at the launch event for Birmingham City University's new alumni venture in London

ACTOR and comedian Sir Lenny Henry heaped praise on the West Midlands' 'cool' renaissance as he launched a networking group for university graduates in London.

Sir Lenny, from Dudley, was appointed as Birmingham City University's chancellor last year. The new venture - 'BCU in Lon-

don' - is open to graduates of the university who are based or have business-interests in the capital.

Addressing 100 guests and alumni at the launch, Sir Lenny said: "We want this launch to form the basis of a strong and enduring network - BCU in London - where graduates and friends of

the university here can come together to forge professional links that recognise what you have in common and the expertise you have in your various disciplines.

"The aim of BCU in London is to bring our alumni together in a formidable network of professionals," he added.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Royalty sought for hospice fayre

THE search is on princes and princesses to take a starring role at a parade through Oldswinford.

Mary Stevens Hospice Summer Fayre is on September 2 will start with a parade through the streets of Oldswinford, which will be led by the Fayre Queen, Princes and Princesses, who will be provided with costumes. The Fayre Queen will also represent the hospice during a 12-month reign.

Categories are Fayre Queen, aged 16 plus; Fayre Princess, 11-15; Fayre Prince, 11-15; Fayre Princess; 4-10; and Fayre Prince, 4-10. To nominate visit www.marystevenshospice.co.uk/event/summer-fayre-2017 by July 30.

Staff and students get cheaper rides

BUS fares are being cut for students and NHS staff in a Birmingham suburb. National Express West Midlands has introduced a £1 single trip between the city centre and Selly Oak, near the University of Birmingham and the Queen Elizabeth Hospital.

The £1 University Hop is valid on the X61, 63, X64 and 98 buses but only for NHS staff and University of Birmingham staff and students. The ticket can be bought at any stop between Birmingham city centre and Griffins Brook Lane or Weoley Hill bus stop. ID will be required.

Nominations open for trust awards

DUDLEY and Walsall Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust has launched its Recognising Success Staff Awards.

This year, members of the public and stakeholders can make nominations on three categories - Patient Champion, Unsung Hero and Working in Collaboration.

Nominations must be submitted by 5pm on August 1. The ceremony is on September 22 at the Banks's Stadium, Walsall. To submit an nomination, see the trust's website - dwmh.nhs.uk/recognising-success-staff-awards/inroduction/ or call 01384 325015.

Re-opening date for Hickory's announced

A POPULAR restaurant that burned down last year is set to reopen later this month.

Hickory's Smokehouse at Wall Heath will open its doors at 11am on July 26.

Rebuilding on the Kidderminster Road restaurant began earlier this year after a fridge electrical fault last August sent the building up in smoke.

Hickory's is part of a small chain of restaurants.

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Vision of museum's new visitor centre



An artist's impression of the new visitor centre planned for the Black Country Living Museum in Dudley

IMAGES have been released showing what the Black Country Living Museum's new visitor centre could look like.

The multi-million pound project has moved a step forward with architects appointed.

Napier Clarke Architects will design the facility, the central feature of a £21.7m Forging Ahead development project at the Tipton Road attraction in Dudley.

The visitor centre will allow the site to link up more closely with other attractions at Castle Hill, such as Dudley Zoo and Castle.

The Heritage Lottery Fund has provided £10m to allow the attraction to be expanded by a third, with the plans also incorporating a new 1940s to 60s town.

Impressed

A total of 24 architects across Europe applied to carry out the build, with Buckinghamshire-based Napier Clarke Architects successfully winning the bid.

Andrew Lovett, chief executive at BCLM, said: "The whole selection panel was very impressed with the highly experienced and enthusiastic

team Napier Clarke Architects had brought together on their pitch; they really seemed to understand what we are trying to achieve."

The upgrade is set to bring in an extra half a million visitors through the attraction's doors each year.

It will bring in a new time period to the attraction and focus on the Black Country in the post-war period, up until the closure of the Baggeridge Coalmine, in Sedgley, in 1968.

Steve Clarke, a director of Napier Clarke Architects alongside Amy Napier, said: "We are delighted to have been appointed."



Interior of the centre, part of the £21.7m Forging Ahead project at the growing Tipton Road attraction

Wester's best for being off guard about talents

THIS dancing security guard proved he has got the moves – and wowed crowds from across the country after the video went viral.

Wester Brown, who has worked in security for 21 years, impressed an audience at a Black Country shopping centre.

A video of him strutting his stuff have been shared hundreds of times online, with Mr Brown getting plenty of backing.

However, he admitted his dancing skills haven't come out of the blue, as 40-year-old Mr Brown used to be a break-dancing instructor.

He was egged on by the crowd at an event at West Bromwich's New Square shopping centre over the weekend.

Given the chance to strut his stuff he lived up to expectations.

Announcer

Father-of-three Mr Brown, who lives in Birmingham, said: "At the time I was in charge of the speaker system and I saw one of the models in a lift.

"There was some music on and I just started dancing and she said 'you could do our show' but I thought they were joking. Then the announcer put me on the spot but I started doing it and it was great – then they called me back for a grand finale as well.

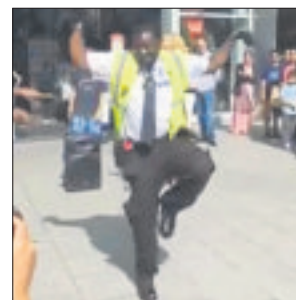
"There were a few nerves at first. But when they asked me to go again I thought 'why not?'"

Mr Brown said it was good to be able to prove to people there was a person behind the hi-vis jacket.

He added: "It's a bit like when you see police officers dancing – it shows they are human and can enjoy themselves. It's not just a badge there is a



Proving a bit handy as a dancer



A Kung Fu inspired shape thrown in



Getting down to the beat



Over to you – the guard's cool finale

person behind it. Down here we like to see ourselves as a community more than anything, rather than being people who tell others what to do.

"Customer service is really important.

"My dancing was a bit of fun for everybody. We had a great turn-out and afterwards everybody who was

asking if I was the one who was dancing.

"It was great to make people happy – that's the main thing we want to do, bring happiness to everybody.

To see the video see <https://www.facebook.com/NewSquareWestBromwich>

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Driver went through 11 red lights fleeing police

A DRIVER from Halesowen led police on a 20-minute high-speed chase after being spotted 'racing' two other motorists, a judge was told.

Filipe Vaz went through 11 red traffic lights during the pursuit which started in Hallens Drive, Wednesbury, at around 10pm on April 30, Wolverhampton Crown Court heard.

The 32-year-old ignored a request to stop from a marked police car and accelerated after being spotted breaking a High Court injunction banning 'car cruising'.

Vaz sped onto Weston Way and headed for Bilston reaching up to 80mph on roads where the speed limit was either 30 or 40mph. He undertook at least one driver.

Stinger

The chase ended when officers deployed a 'stinger' across Stourbridge Road which burst two of the Honda Civic's tyres and forced the driver to come to a halt in a nearby car park.

The defendant had already been given a six-month suspended sentence by the High Court for breaking the terms of the injunction in a separate hearing. He received an interim disqualification following the chase but was caught driving again soon afterwards and is due to be sentenced for that by magistrates later this month.

Mr Christopher O'Gorman, defending, said: "He seems to be going through the teenage years he did not live the first time around. He is a father and really should know better."

Vaz from Polden Close, Halesowen pleaded guilty to dangerous driving and failing to stop for police. He was given a four-month prison sentence suspended for two years and banned from driving for 18 months. He was ordered to do 120 hours unpaid work and pay £200 costs.

Hundreds are in the pink to Race For Life

TEARS, smiles and gritted teeth – hundreds of fundraisers took part in an emotional charity race to raise cash for cancer research.

Race For Life saw women and children pound the grounds of Himley Hill in Dudley in a 5km race on Sunday.

Before the race started a warm-up drill was performed and then a minute's silence for runners to remember why they were taking part.

The emotions got the better of many with tears on show as runners ran from the start line. But there was also plenty of smiles and waves from the participants, who will raise well over £5,000 for Cancer Research UK.

Entrants paid up to £15 to take part, but raise far more in sponsorship from friends, family and work colleagues.

And the reasons for taking part were clear. Runners put signs on their back with names of those who have suffered or died from cancer, many said 'mom', 'nan', 'dad'.

It was also a chance for some who have won their battle with cancer to celebrate the all-clear, and pay back money to the research which has helped them.

Support

Mother Zoe Farinha, aged 40, from Halesowen, was recently given the all-clear from bowel cancer. She enlisted a team of six friends to take part in the race, which started at 11am. They have raised more than £1,000.

Mrs Farinha said: "This is the end of my nightmare, and a chance to move on. I've made it thanks to the support from friends and family. It is a great feeling to come here and be surrounded by my friends once more, raising money."

Race For Life has been run by Cancer Research UK in partnership with Tesco for the past 15 years. The next Race For Life event is the Pretty Muddy Birmingham 5k on Sunday at Cofton Park.



Hundreds of runners in their pink outfits at the start of the race in the grounds at Himley Hall



Donna Preston, from Wordsley, with daughter Leah Strachan and friend Charlie Smith



Laura Pickering, Nicloe Darby, Steph Patterson, Zoe Farinha, Clair Jones and Kim McEnery of Halesowen

NEWS IN BRIEF

Housing proposed to replace eyesore

A KEY gateway to Dudley will be re-vamped, as council chiefs revealed plans to demolish an eyesore building and build new homes in its place.

Dudley Council has bought the former Welcome Home Designs furniture store in Wolverhampton Street and plans to build affordable housing on the site.

The move has been backed by MP Ian Austin, who said: "Let's hope it heralds regeneration of the whole street."

The building, on the corner of Wolverhampton Street and School Street, has been derelict for a number of years and has fallen into disrepair.

NHS Trust's work in public spotlight

A HEALTH trust is inviting the public to attend its annual members' meeting to find out more about its services and how it is performing.

The Dudley Group NHS Trust's Annual Members Meeting is taking place on July 20 in the Clinical Education Centre at Russells Hall Hospital. The event will run from 5pm until 8.30pm. Free parking is available. Places are limited and to book a place call (01384) 321124 or email foundationmembers@dgh.nhs.uk

There will be a question and answer session with trust directors.

Plea for history loving volunteers

DUDLEY Council is looking for people interested in history and heritage who would like to receive free training to provide information at heritage events and activities.

The project forms part of the borough's 'townscape heritage scheme'. Email michele.birch@dudley.gov.uk

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IN MY VIEW

with Mark Andrews



Losing my religion, to get out of assembly?

WHAT is it with youngsters today? Rhannon Shipton and Lily McAllister-Sutton are two 15-year-old schoolgirls – I refuse to call them ‘students’ – from Cardiff. And they have found themselves in the news over the past few weeks for launching a petition which says that religious worship in schools infringes their human rights. Basically, they want to bunk off assembly. Of course, they are not actually obliged to attend assembly, their parents can ask the school for them to opt out. But that would be too conciliatory. It’s the principle, innit?

Needless to say, the politicians, all desperate to be “down viv da kids” at the moment, are bending over backwards to congratulate the pair. The Welsh Assembly is writing to the education secretary asking for their complaint to be considered. Assembly member Neil McEvoy said: “It is really great to see young people engage in politics and taking an interest.”

Well, I’m sorry, but I don’t think it is really great at all. In fact, I think it is a rather sad. When I was 15, my main pre-occupations were smuggling hair gel into school without my parents finding out, daydreaming about girls, and worrying about whether Aston Villa would get out of the Second Division. Come to think of it, apart from the hair gel, pretty much the same as they are today.

Complaining to the Government that school assembly was a violation of my human rights somehow slipped my mind.

Besides, if you didn’t want to go into assembly, there was a very simple trick, which didn’t involve petitions, human rights laws or anything like that. You wore white socks. Or the wrong shoes. Every time, without fail, a certain teacher – who many pupils thought could actually smell non-regulation clothing – would pull you out of the line, and make you stand in the foyer for a spot of public humiliation.

HAVING enjoyed the gorgeous sunshine of the weekend, I did what any self-respecting Black Countryman would do on Sunday night and sat in the garden with a glass of beer and a tabloid newspaper. And when the sky opened up, and the rain came cascading down, I again did what any self-respecting Black Countryman would do – put the parasol up and carried on reading.

Typical Britain, you never know what the weather is going to do next. One minute you’re putting your underpants in the freezer to keep them cool, the next you’re sticking them in the microwave to warm them up. Very confusing.

General pattern is to avoid all the key questions



Tony Blair, said to be not straight with the nation over invading Iraq



Newsreader Ri Chun-Hee, almost dancing in her seat announcing the missile launch



Geri Horner’s approach over problems is to think what the Queen would do

Answers? No, leave people wanting more

IN a single week, see how the Establishment serves the people. First the Grenfell Tower inquiry gets a chairman nobody wants. Then the coroner says the Birmingham Pub Bombings inquiry will not investigate who was guilty. Finally, after 14 years, Sir John Chilcot admits that Tony Blair was not straight with the nation over invading Iraq. See the pattern? Go as slowly as possible, avoid all the key questions and always, always leave the people begging for real answers.

ACCORDING to the Local Government Association, bus travel in Britain is at its lowest for decades with a drop of 75 million journeys from 2015-2017. By pure chance, this news broke on the very day I applied for my bus pass. Also on the same day a court report appeared about a thug who punched four bus passengers. He wasn’t a psychiatric case; he was just ‘having a bad day’. That’s the trouble with public transport. Your journey is only ever as pleasant as your least pleasant fellow-passenger.

IRONY corner. As I applied for my bus pass it struck me as odd that, although you can prove your identity with passport and utility bills, the preferred ID for obtaining free rides on buses is your driving licence.

IN the 1930s, the world wasted a lot of energy laughing at that preposterous pair of poseurs, Hitler and Mussolini. By the time we realised they were no laughing matter, it was too late. One online contributor, responding to this week’s launch of an intercontinental ballistic missile by North Korea, quipped: “I hope it’s not

THE BEST OF PETER RHODES



war because Celtic have just signed a Korean striker, Nok wun-in.” Others posted messages about Kim Jong-un’s bonkers haircut. Hilarious. Now, where’s the nearest lead-lined bunker?

NORTH Korea wheeled out its favourite veteran newsreader, the hyper-enthusiastic Ri Chun-Hee, to announce the missile launch. She was almost dancing in her seat and no-one in North Korea was left in any doubt that this was wonderful news. Good news on British TV is indicated by Mishal Husain raising one eyebrow half a millimetre.

IN an interview with one of the weekend glossies, Geri Horner (formerly Spice Girl Halliwell) describes her royal approach to life’s problems: “When I’m in doubt, I often think, what would the Queen do?” Interesting tip, although I suspect the answer is that the Queen would summon a footman, and the rest of us cannot.

IF you watched the Channel 4 News report on the Mediterranean migrant crisis you would have learned how the migrants pay thousands of euros to the people smugglers in Libya. Then they set to sea in leaky boats. They are met a few miles offshore by small boats crewed by various well-meaning charities who summon

bigger rescue boats. The migrants are transferred to the bigger boats. Finally, the smugglers’ mates turn up, smiling broadly, to collect the empty boats and tow them back to Libya for another trip. In the process, hundreds of migrants drown. You can’t help thinking that if the Royal Marines were ordered to seize the smugglers’ boats and sink them, this vile trade would become unprofitable pretty damn quick. At present this obscenity is not so much a crisis as a well-oiled business.

YOU may recall my piece a couple of years ago when my optician warned darkly against keeping contact lenses in the bathroom. Sure enough a report in Business Insider magazine tells us that when you flush a toilet, the swirling water that removes your waste from the bowl also mixes with small particles of that waste, shooting aerosolised faeces into the air.” Apparently, this “toilet plume” can travel 15 feet.

I’VE just taken a strange phone call from someone claiming to be a BT billing manager “responsible for internet ups and downs.” She was offering me a £180 refund for my slow internet connection. When she asked me to switch on my computer, alarms bells rang. I suspect this is a new variation on the old technical support” scam. Be warned.

PRITHEE, harken for ‘tis global warming in Poldark (BBC1). A reader wonders how, with Christmas approaching in Cornwall, a lover can find wild primroses to bind into a posy for his lass.

TALKING POINT



Paws to consider the wishes of others

AAH, there’s nothing like the freedom of a brisk walk across the rolling hills of our green and pleasant land, with a trusty four-legged friend at your side.

Is that not the dream of every dog lover? Wandering the length and breadth of their locale, with the friendly compliance of their fellow walkers? Yeah, right.

Admittedly, me and the missus were not bothered about bringing up a puppy as we required a dog who was used to children, not too boisterous, house-trained and, not to put too fine a point on it, a bit long in the tooth. We settled on a lovely black Staffie/labrador cross, who at a conservative estimate is about seven, called Shadow and she is just perfect for us.

She’s had a life. She’s almost completely deaf, her teeth have seen better days, she strives constant contact, our sofa is now her domain, and her breath leaves a lot to be desired; which is evident when you get the Staffie facewash that all owners of the breed will be familiar with.

We were warned there were issues with other dogs, and we found that out for ourselves pretty soon! But the number of times an approaching dog walker assures you: “Don’t worry he’s friendly and won’t do anything.” Then of course, they foray into erm, Shadow’s intimate territory and then wonder why she might lash out, especially if there is more than one dippy off-the-lead doggy bounding over for a sniff.

Okay, their dog may not have a problem with other dogs and want to purely be sociable, but our dog does and even if we issue the warning that there might not be a fairy-waggy-tail ending, they completely ignore it before nervous Shadow goes for the jugular. I hasten to add, that in all these instances, she will be on the lead, but at 24 kg, she’s a handful!

Sometimes there are snippy little comments about what a shame it is that a dog has to be kept on a lead – excuse me, but would you rather have one dog in the veterinary hospital and no doubt our dog forced to be muzzled, or even worse, put down? I have seen other dogs with muzzles on and feel so dreadfully sorry for them and their owners.

It’s no life for a dog not to be able to pant properly, let alone sniff or bark. Yes there may be the odd out-of-control dog that needs action taken against them, but if they are loving, docile heffalumps like ours, the only reason they have ended up in such a situation is down to the irresponsible actions of other owners.

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Princes Harry and Wills have it too easy

WE can only have admiration for our Queen. However I fear for the future of the monarchy.

Prince Harry has openly said he and his brother William would not have chosen to be Royals. One can sympathise, but on the other hand they seem happy enough to make full use of the privileges attached.

Prince Harry has said in not so many words that he wishes to 'cherry pick'

the charities he supports. At the moment he is helping elephants in Africa.

Being Royal, like many jobs, is also having to do work you might find boring and unpleasant at times. If he and his brother don't want this then let them become private citizens, find work like everyone else, and with no privileges.

I welcome the way they have brought young people's mental health issues to

the fore, but am beginning to think they are playing too much on it for public sympathy. Many other young people have lost a parent or similar too and had to cope with poverty, poor education, poor housing on top.

Maybe it's just a generational thing, like Her Majesty I belong to the generation which just gets on with things.

JANE WILLIAMS
Walsall

There is no magic money tree

JEREMY Corbyn's surge in the last election was entirely logical when you consider he promised a lot of free stuff to all types of different people.

Public sector pay rises, free university education, increase spending on the NHS and schools, also nationalising industries, it looks and sounds great - except nothing in life is free. All you got to do is get other people to pay for it in form of taxes and increases in borrowing. There is no magic money tree.

Now even the Conservatives have started to buy into it, so out goes austerity, our UK debt is closing in on £1.8tn. Soon it will be £2tn, so living within our means will go out of the window, therefore any party who stops austerity will suffer at the ballot box.

There's no remote chance our children and even grandchildren will be able to pay off the UK debt. In fact, they will probably add to it.

MR R F GOODALL
Wordsley

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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Alert young voters are country's future

IN reply to Mr B Williams of Wordsley ('Younger voters immature') Halesowen Chronicle, June 29. Youngsters these days are more alert to what goes on than we ever were.

These young people are fighting to get what they want and we should encourage them. Money does grow on trees Mr Williams. Haven't you heard? Mrs May has just found out she can give the DUP £1bn plus, and you know what they say about trees, they have branches. Perhaps one will sprout another billion for the NHS, schools, the police, social care, etc, but I will not hold my breath.

Leave young voters alone. They are our future. After all if May can conjure up a billion pounds for the DUP to support her, who knows what she can do for the people of the UK. Again I won't hold my breath.

MRS J GARFIELD
Halesowen

Hard road for nation's lorry drivers

YOUR correspondent P Cole of Kingswinford (Chronicle Letters, June 29) informed us of the Cole's family foray to the lakes.

What I do not like from Britain's No.1 driver is his constant criticising of lorry drivers. Today's professional drivers are under extreme pressure to get goods of all descriptions, including thermo-frigged items, to their destinations on time.

With road congestion in the UK at its worst, hours restrictions (from both UK and the EU) and penalty payments (for late delivery) imposed by the supermarkets, drivers strive to do their job - and do a good job.

I worked for over 55 years as a professional lorry driver and in my day, I knew of drivers under stress from employers and customers. Bad enough then, but nothing like it is today! So leave them alone Mr Cole, go to the Lake District, enjoy your holiday.

MALCOLM SAXON
Tipton

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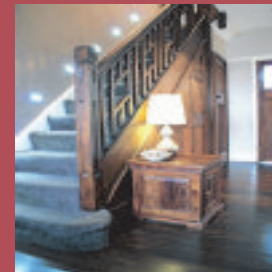
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Government say police do have enough cash to fight crime

THE Government has hit back at claims that police under funding is responsible for a spike in crime in the West Midlands.

Officials insist that the region's force has the resources it needs. Crime has risen by eight per cent in the West Midlands over the last year, which senior officers and the region's police and crime commissioner (PCC) attribute largely to continued budget cuts. But the Home Office says it has protected police spending with West Midlands Police (WMP) receiving £1.6 million more this year than 2015-16.

Business is expanding on estate

A SPECIALIST guttering firm has added a new premises to help it cope with increased demand.

Thaxen Developments, which specialises in replacing concrete guttering with uPVC, has opened another unit at The Pensnett Estate in Kingswinford, after a boost in business. It already operates from two units on the estate.

Lucy Hurst, managing director, said: "The company is growing very quickly and in just two years we have gone from three members of staff to more than 30 and, at the end of our second year, recorded a turnover of £3 million. We were keen to stay on the estate because it is centrally located and is convenient for our staff, so were very pleased when LCP found this additional unit for us because it means we can continue to expand."

West Midlands PCC David Jamieson says that in real terms the force has lost £145m since 2010.

A Home Office spokesman said that decisions on where to deploy resources and the size of the police workforce 'are a matter for chief constables and police and crime commissioners', adding that 'police forces continue to have the resources they need to do their important work'.

Protected

The spokesman said: "The Government has protected overall police spending in real terms since Spending Review 2015, and this year West Midlands Police is receiving £1.6m more direct resource funding than in 2015-16."

Mr Jamieson said the Home Office was 'alarmingly out of touch' and accused the Government of using 'disturbingly misleading' figures. He said it was an 'indisputable fact' that WMP received £6m less in Government funding this year than it did last year.

"As a former teacher of mathematics I would have been very disappointed if any of my Year 7s made an error with that sum, let alone the Government," he added.

Riders get buzz from fundraising challenge



Gayle Duncan and Aimee Billingham set off for Wales on their bikes in aid the Honeypot Charity for children

TWO friends got in the saddle to raise more than £1,400 for a charity that provides holidays for young carers.

Chemotherapy nurses Gayle Duncan, aged 54, and Aimee Billingham, aged 32, embarked on a 65-mile cycle ride, from Wolverhampton to Manafon Caravan Park, between Welshpool and Newtown, in Wales - for the Honeypot Charity. The cause supports youngsters who look after relatives who may be ill or disabled.

Both work for an organisation that looks after patients in their own homes and were inspired by late patient David Ryan, of Sprint Refrigeration and Catering Ltd, whose family gave £500 to the project.

They set off from Gayle's home, in Victoria Road, Bradmore, Wolverhampton, to the park where she has a holiday home. She was joined by Aimee, of Stourbridge, and relatives in a support car and were able to

complete the challenge in nine and a half hours. Sheri Rogers, of Honeypot Charity, who is Gayle's sister said: "The charity is based in Honeypot House, in Wales, and we provide short breaks for children, aged five to 12, who are young carers. We are fundraising for an indoor pool for our young guests."

The nurses have so far raised £1,416. Donate at www.justgiving.com/fundraising/manafon

More misery for motorists on the M5

MOTORISTS have been urged to start planning alternative routes as the next phase of a major multi-million pound repair scheme begins on the M5.

Concrete repairs and waterproofing work at the Oldbury viaduct, between junctions 1 for West Bromwich and 2 for Oldbury, get under way at the end of the month. Highways England chiefs said to keep the M5 open a 'contraflow' system is being put in place.

From the end of July all traffic will be diverted onto the northbound carriageway, with two lanes operating in each direction, along with a 30mph limit. Slip roads will be kept open throughout, to ease effects on the local network, but drivers are advised to expect long delays.

The scheme, costing more than £100 million, finishes in autumn 2018, with some minor work continuing into the following spring. Motorists have been urged to consider routes such as the M42 and M6 to keep congestion to a minimum on the M5 and surrounding roads.

Highways England said: "To help with this there will be changes at key junctions in the area, including at M6 junction 8 southbound and M5 junction 4a northbound. These measures are essential to manage the volume and flow of traffic."

Teenage market held at glass cone

BARGAIN buys and unique products will be on sale as a Teenage Market comes to Dudley this weekend.

It will take place at the Red House Glass Cone this Saturday and Sunday, and run by teenagers.

The event is organised by Dudley Council. It will be open 11am to 4pm and admission is free.

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Mayoress in the driving seat for classic fun day

THOUSANDS of people turned up to an annual fun day as part of the Black Country Festival.

Netherton Park fun day had something for everyone on Saturday, with a host of games and activities.

There was a classic car display, stalls, a bouncy pirate ship, an inflatable slide and much more. Guests also made the most of the live outdoor stage behind Netherton Arts Centre as well as a separate dance and performance area.

Steve Edwards, organiser of the Black Country Festival, said: 'It was absolutely fantastic, there were lots of people there, so that's all we can ask for really.'

The fun day now marks one of the highlights of the year in Dudley - and is linked with the Black Country Festival to strengthen community ties.

The festival is the annual celebration bringing together a month long series of events to mark Black Country Day, held tomorrow (Friday).



Mayor and mayoress Dave and Barbara Tyler with a 1948 Jag at the fun day

Brier

Meanwhile, council chiefs have said work is going well ahead of the Brier Fair - a family day out in Brierley Hill on Saturday, July 22, from 9am to 5pm.

The Brier Fair will see a funfair and market stalls run along the High Street. A giant sandpit and water games will be located in the Moor Shopping Centre, street performers will roam the town centre and acts on stage will keep visitors entertained.

The event is being led by Dudley Council alongside other organisations, including the Brierley Hill Community Forum.

RSPCA open shop in town

A NEW RSPCA charity shop which will raise funds for the animals that go through the doors of the charity's Birmingham Animal Centre was opening to the public this week.

RSPCA inspector Vicki Taylor was opening the shop in High Street, Brierley Hill, yesterday (Wednesday).

The shop, run by manager Rachel Ryan and deputy Catherine Yarnold, will stock clothes and accessories plus

bric-a-brac, music, books and household items.

As well as second-hand items, the shop will also stock a range of RSPCA products.

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10 Fatal collision driver seen 'racing' on video

Halesowen Chronicle Thursday, July 13, 2017

THIS is the moment a motorist tried to lure another driver into a road race – seconds before smashing into another car and killing a woman.

James Mills was doing 70mph as he used the busy dual carriageway near Merry Hill 'as a race track'.

Mills, aged 23, had been on the busy Pedmore Road, near Merry Hill, moving from side to side as if to force over the car he had been trying to race and undertaking other vehicles.

One motorist described his black Ford Focus, which had been modified to make it more powerful, as 'hurling past him 'like a rocket'.

Victim Vijaya Mistry, a 74-year-old grandmother had been sitting next to her husband in their Mondeo on February 3 as he waited to turn right into The Gateway. She was thrown through the passenger window by the impact and died of her injuries later in hospital.

At Wolverhampton Crown Court, Mills, from School Road in Brierley Hill, was jailed for five years and four months for causing death by dangerous driving. He was banned from driving for almost a decade and will have to pass an extended re-test in order to get his licence back.

Mark Crozier from West Midlands Police's Collision Investigation Unit, said: "This is a terribly sad case that shows the dangers of driving recklessly – even just for a matter of seconds.

"Mills was essentially using a public road as a race track, showed a total disregard for other road users."



Mills' car ringed as it hurtles along the road

James Mills

Homeless project backed

THE Mayor of Dudley has helped launch a campaign to tackle homelessness among teenagers.

Councillor Dave Tyler invited representatives from the YMCA's Open Door project to the parlour to launch '25 in 25' after naming the programme as one of his charities for the year.

Open Door provides accommodation for 16-and-17-year-olds with families along with valuable support. The campaign aims to recruit 25 new support families in the lead up to Christmas.

Councillor Tyler said: "I am delighted to be able to raise money for Open Door during my mayoral year.

"It is such an important cause, helping to provide a basic human need for the people who need it most."

There are currently 16 host families providing a home for young people across Dudley borough.

University graduates find better paid jobs

A RECORD number of graduates from the University of Wolverhampton are walking out of the lecture hall and into a well-paid job – many of them staying in the West Midlands.

A survey found 96.3 per cent of students, 1,790 of the 1,885 who graduated last year from the university were in work or further study after they had left – outperforming the UK average of 94.3 per cent.

That is the highest number recorded at the university. And 81 per cent of those who found jobs did so in the West Midlands, some earning up to £60,000.

Meanwhile, Staffordshire University has seen 97.5 per cent of graduates now employed or in further study.

Annual

The Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education Survey is a national annual survey of everyone who has recently graduated from university or HE college.

Each year universities contact graduates six months after they have completed their studies to find out their employment status.

It shows more than two thirds of University of Wolverhampton students also go into graduate-level jobs with 68 per cent being employed in professional or managerial roles – up from

By Robert Cox

66 per cent last year. The survey results also showed that 69 per cent were earning £15,000 to £29,999 and a further 16 per cent earning £30,000 to £59,999 six months after graduating.

The average starting salary of a graduate has risen from £22,692 to £24,024.

Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Professor Ian Oakes, said: "University of Wolverhampton students have demonstrated they have the knowledge, skills and qualities that employers are seeking.

"We have had high employability rates over the last few years. So to improve once again is an outstanding achievement by our staff and students."

Raising a glass to mark Vera's 100th



Vera Leary celebrates her 100th at The Dudley Arms

A GREAT-grandmother who made aircraft parts in the Second World War has celebrated her 100th birthday.

Vera Beatrice Leary, who lives at Engelberg Care Home in Wolverhampton, shared a toast with family members during a lunch at the Dudley Arms pub in Dudley on July 4. Her granddaughter, Dawn Cowling, a PCSO based in Lincolnshire, described Vera as being devoted to her family.

Ms Cowling, aged 49, said: "She is a very strong, loyal and supportive individual woman. She looks after all of us, she devoted her life to looking after all of us."

Vera was born in Wolverhampton and worked as an engraver for aircraft parts at a factory in Wolverhampton. Her husband died 21 years ago and she has also outlived a son. She has a daughter, Sylvia, 74, who lives in Wombourne, two grand-daughters and three great-grandchildren.

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Lee Farrington (M.D) of Dolphin Lifts and also Vice Chairman of Cradley Town f.c said it's all about grassroots and getting children from the community into football. Cradley chairman Trevor Thomas echoed Lee's sentiments plus also added that the club have a long term plan and commitment to the community, and have along with academy director

Wayne Mundon (ex Birmingham City, Leicester City, L.A Galaxy) have come up with the idea which has now over 200 Children (including an under 15's female team).

Cradley also have an affiliation with Birmingham City f.c who would have first refusal on any of their youngsters, a statement in itself of the clubs intent and commitment

The club are also going for the F.A Club Charter and the transformation is going a lot quicker than expected, and are proud to be associated with Dolphin lifts,

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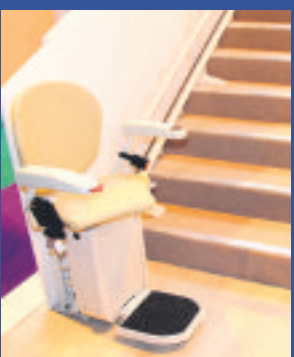
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Tapir Luna gets her teeth into life at zoo

DUDLEY Zoo's new addition is continuing to grow and is bonding well with her parents, five weeks after her birth. Luna the tapir has doubled in size since she was born and keepers have even spotted her first few teeth. Senior keeper Sam Grove said: "Baby tapirs will drink mum's milk up until they're approximately four months old, when they'll start eating solids."



Meena and Luna

"Luna's feeding from Meena really well and has rapidly increased in size over the last few weeks. "But we've spotted her nibbling on a few branches and trying to eating the small buds off trees, which is obviously to try and cut her teeth as we've noticed she's gained her two tiny white ones at the front." She has also had a busy week, firstly celebrating her mother Meena's birthday and then meeting her father, Chico, for the first time. Sam added: "We've kept mum and baby separated from dad since her birth, while they bonded and this week introduced them together and he immediately went and tickled his new daughter with his trunk, as if he was saying hello."

Bank staff help to fuel food donations



Nationwide Merry Hill customer service manager Stephanie Barnfield, branch manager Katrina Green, Dudley branch manager Claire Preston and Black Country foodbank office manager Jen Coleman

KIND-HEARTED bank colleagues helped fuel a mission to deliver food parcels across the region. Around £1,000 was donated to the Black Country Foodbank, in Brierley Hill, by two Nationwide bank branches in Merry Hill and Dudley. The money will now go towards the cost of diesel for the Foodbank vans. Managers of Nationwide got in touch with the Foodbank to find out how their efforts could best aid the charity. Jen Coleman, office manager of the food bank in Albion Street, said: "The diesel is a crucial aspect of our operation and the donation is brilliant. "The sum of £1,000 will go towards the cost of diesel for the food bank's vans, which help deliver to 19 centres throughout the Black Country." She added: "This is a different type of donation towards fuel costs which the food bank have not received before. The donation towards fuelling the vans was received with great thanks as sometimes attention and donations are not often given to other vital areas of the food bank's operation such as this." The Nationwide branches also donated food which they collected in-branch. In January this year the Black Country Foodbank fed their millionth person since 2006.

Raise glass to cricket club's beer festival

ALE-LOVERS can raise a glass at Halesowen Cricket Club's first beer festival this weekend. More than 20 real ales and 10 ciders are available from independent and local breweries at the three-day festival, which starts tomorrow (Friday). The opening night will also feature a variety of gins, while Saturday will have a prosecco bar. There will be live music being played throughout from local bands Squeaky Pete's Liquor and Poker Band on Friday and The Glassroom on Saturday. There will also be live cricket to take in as the 1st XI play a Birmingham League game on the Saturday and then face Bromsgrove on the Sunday in a T20 league fixture. For more information and for tickets visit www.halesowenbeerfest.co.uk.

Six years for drink-drive son who killed his own father

A SPEEDING drink driver who killed his father in a crash has been jailed for six years.

Kuljinder Gakhal jumped a queue of traffic, ignored a red light and drove into the path of a 44-ton lorry, Wolverhampton Crown Court heard. The juggernaut jack-knifed as its driver braked but he could not stop the vehicle ploughing into the side of

the S-Type Jaguar where 53-year-old passenger Daljit Singh Gakhal sat.

He refused to allow a blood sample to be tested for alcohol content after the crash, on May 20 last year.

When he finally was tested, it registered more than twice the legal limit.

Hurtled

Miss Elizabeth Power, prosecuting, said moments before the crash, he almost lost control of the car, for which

he was not insured, as it hurtled along Birmingham New Road towards Dudley at almost double the 40mph limit.

Mr Peter Hunter, defending, said: "He is a shell of the man he once was."

The Pinewood Studios chef, aged 30, from Thames Road, Slough, pleaded guilty to causing death by careless driving when under the influence of drink having failed, without reasonable excuse, to permit the analysis of a blood sample.

Safety fears over classroom block

A SCHOOL wants to replace a classroom block on its site after safety fears concerning the design.

Huntingtree Primary in Halesowen is seeking planning permission from Dudley Council to build a replacement classroom block.

A report submitted to the local authority says the existing one 'has been the subject of major concern for some years following the collapse of a similar classroom design in Leicestershire some years ago'.

A report by a structural engineer found that the existing building would be hard to upgrade and instead recommended the site for demolition. Under the new plan, there would be improvements to drainage and a pedestrian gated access off Huntingtree Road.

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FOCUS ON CRADLEY, CRADLEY HEATH AND OLD HILL

Revamp of labour club is given the go-ahead

PLANS to turn a Labour club into a bar and grill have been given the green light by council chiefs.

Cradley Heath Labour Club closed suddenly in 2015 after more than 90 years.

It has stood empty ever since – but proposals to revamp the club have now been given the go-ahead.

The club, in Graingers Lane, will be turned into an eating and drinking venue in plans welcomed by local councillors.

Ward councillor Julie Webb said: "I'm glad the plans have been approved and will have some life pumped back into it – rather than go derelict and open to arsonists."

"I really welcome these plans and they were approved with delegated powers so there was no issue at all with the application."

Entertainment

The Labour club was a popular venue during the 1960s, 70s and 80s and would regularly draw large crowds.

For live bands and other entertainment.

But the club went into a period of decline after the turn of the century and closed suddenly. It had been a fixture in the town for almost 100 years when

the committee in charge revealed they could no longer afford to keep it running.

Councillor Webb said: "It was the same as most Labour clubs, unfortunately they are becoming history."

But she added: "It is really good that it is going to be used again and a similar type of facility."

The club opened in 1922 and its membership reached its peak in the 1960s though the venue remained popular until around 20 years ago.

The Labour club closed after secretary Albert Gough revealed the committee could no longer afford to keep it running. Several workers at the club lost their jobs as a result of the closure. The building remained empty until it was bought for a six-figure sum.

By David Cosgrove



Kris Griffin, left, receives his SLE certificate from Ed Masterson, head of St John Bosco School

Specialist supporting schools

A NEW specialist leader of education has been appointed at a Cradley Heath school.

Kris Griffin, 42, who has worked at Ormiston Forge Academy since 2013 as director of marketing, was recently appointed through the National College for Teaching and Leadership.

Specialist leaders of education (SLEs) are described as outstanding leaders who have the skills to support individuals or teams in similar positions in other schools.

Mr Griffin said: "It's great recognition for support staff who are vital to the smooth operation of educational establishments everywhere."

Meanwhile, Maria Mincher, vice-principal at Ormiston Forge Academy has left to take over as head at Kingsmead School in Hednesford.

A former hospice on the market

A FORMER hospice in Oldbury has gone on the market with an asking price of more than £400,000.

The Bradbury House Day Hospice closed in March following a reorganisation of 'end of life' care at Sandwell and West Birmingham Hospitals NHS Trust.

The site, on Wolverhampton Road in Oldbury, is now being offered for sale through property agents SDL Bigwood.

James Carver, of SDL Bigwood, said: "This is a building where those terminally ill were cared for with love and dedication. It brought succour and support to patients and their relatives, but is now set to enter a new phase. This is a rare opportunity to acquire a substantial property in an excellent and prominent location."

Creative baby keepsakes

CLASSES for parents wanting to create keepsakes, such as their new baby's hand and footprints, are being launched at a supermarket.

The classes are called 'Tiny Treasures' and are being held at the Cradley Heath Tesco store, in their 'Community Space' during August.

For further information visit www.thecreationstation.co.uk website.

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It is just the bear essentials for Dave



Dave Healey and Tony Ellis with one of the many colourful bears that have appeared, see thebiggleuth.co.uk

IT'S the bear necessities as Blind Dave Heeley will taking on a race with a difference in aid of charity.

The marathon man will be running Sandwell's Big Sleuth project, which sees a collection of colourful creations dotted around the borough as part of an art trail.

Dave will also be joined by his running partner Tony Ellis, as they set off the light-hearted mission amidst their current 24 Great Runs challenge continuing throughout this year.

The bear statues have been created as part of a 10-week project called the Big Sleuth, which aims to raise money for Birmingham Children's Hospital.

"If you go down to the woods today you're sure of a big surprise...", Dave laughed. "There will be me and Tony doing The Big Sleuth trail and its all in aid of Birmingham's Children Hospital, which is brilliant."

"I was contacted by the council and they explained they had these six bears around Sandwell, with three in West Bromwich."

"We'll be starting at Warley Woods and then going on to Bearwood, Oldbury and finishing up with a celebration outside Central Sixth in West Brom."

"It's a really good cause and something that promotes the area well too," Dave added.

The bears are across Birmingham and Sandwell, including three in Bearwood

BY SIMON STONE

and three in West Bromwich. It follows the Big Hoot trail in 2015 when owl figurines were put in place.

One of the figures, called Bussy Bear, has been installed near Bearwood Clock Tower. Bear-Have Like a Girl, painted as a skater, will be at Lightwoods Park, with a third, Bentley The Bearwood Bear, at Warley Woods. In West Bromwich, Bearolution will be in High Street, Uncle B outside the visitor centre at Sandwell Valley Park Farm and Picnic Time For Teddy Bears near Sandwell College sixth form.

Sandwell Council's cabinet member for leisure Councillor Richard Marshall said: "It's great that we've been able to join in with The Big Sleuth trail this year. The Big Hoot owls in 2015 went down fantastically well in Birmingham and straight away I knew I wanted us to be a part of the next project."



Councillor Richard Marshall a bear in Lightwoods Park

Praise for progress in children's services

OFSTED inspectors have praised Dudley Council children's services 'positive progress' as they continue to improve after being rated inadequate last year.

In a letter following a third successful monitoring visit last month, inspectors praised many of the actions taken by social workers and managers to continually improve children's services.

The watchdog said the council is 'systematically and diligently addressing the actions in the improvement plan and this work is beginning to make a positive difference to children'.

Councillor Anne Millward said: "We are delighted to have received a third successful monitoring visit. We are moving in the right direction to transform services."

Ribs shattered in golf club attack

A MAN who attacked a father-of-three with a golf club, shattering his ribs and puncturing a lung, has been spared immediate jail.

Michael Sargent, of Sedgley, was given 14 months, suspended for a year-and-a-half, after pleading guilty to unlawfully wounding Christopher Radcliffe on January 8 last year.

Wolverhampton Crown Court heard Mr Radcliffe visited Sargent at home in Rowan Road after discovering his wife and three children were there.

Mr Simon Hanns, prosecuting, said Mr Radcliffe had declined an invitation to enter, instead waiting on a wall outside. While he was waiting, said Mr Hanns, Sargent, aged 21, came running out with a golf club hidden behind his back and attacked Mr Rad-

cliffe, witnessed by his three children. Mr Radcliffe was taken to New Cross Hospital but collapsed with a rib and punctured a lung. Sargent was arrested but twice failed to appear at court before handing himself in. He was given an extra month for twice not answering his bail.

Mr Charles Crinion, defending, e said Sargent had made good progress while in prison for skipping bail.

Albion foundation on prize shortlist

THE Albion Foundation, a charity partner of West Bromwich Albion FC, has been shortlisted for an award in recognition of its work to promote citizenship.

The foundation has been nominated for the Active Citizens' Fund Project Award at the West Midlands Outstanding Citizens' Awards, organised by West Midlands Police & Crime Commissioner, David Jamieson. The Foundation received funding towards its school holidays sports programme for boys and girls between the ages of 12 and 18.

This award will be given to the organisation that has been judged to have made the best use of the funding.

Allison Tripney, of The Albion Foundation, said: "We are really proud that our work is being recognised and we would like to thank our enthusiastic, committed participants."

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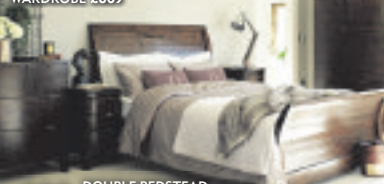
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COLOURFUL wildflowers are springing up at open spaces and grass verges across Sandwell.

Five sites have been sown with a mix of wildflowers, creating a stunning multi-coloured display – brightening up the area and attracting bees and butterflies.

The flowers not only look pretty and benefit local wildlife, they reduce the need for strimming, mowing and pesticides.

Three of the sites – Ashes Road open space in Oldbury, Sandy Lane open space in Friar Park and Balls Hill Park in West Bromwich – have had new bollards recently installed following encampments.

Councillor David Hosell said: “We have had so much feedback from residents, they have gone down incredibly well.”

Tournament helps charity

A FOOTBALL tournament is being organised to raise funds for the British Heart Foundation.

Gurcharan and Herjinder Bhujhangy, of Dudley, are organising a five-a-side charity football tournament at Goals, in Cakemore Road, Blackheath on July 22.

Teams can take part with a maximum of seven players, adult teams £70 and children's £30. Call 0121 561 3000.

FOCUS ON BLACKHEATH AND ROWLEY REGIS

Blackspot to get £100k revamp with drive sensors

AN accident blackspot where 26 people have been injured in crashes since 2009 is set to undergo a £100,000 revamp.

Plans to overhaul the junction of Doulton Road and Dudley Road, in Rowley Regis, are set to be given the go-ahead at a council meeting.

Council bosses said the revamp of the junction, which will see traffic lights installed, came after a review of accidents. This found that between December 2009 and February 2017 there were 13 separate incidents which led to 26 casualties. Councillor Chris Tranter, who represents the Rowley ward, said: “It’s a very nasty junction especially coming up the road. It’s a steep hill and was originally brought to my notice due to the housing developments.

“We intend to install traffic lights that will allow big vans to cross on the other side of the road and swing around to Dudley. They will be set back further down the road to allow access for the traffic.

“The houses in the vicinity will have sensors put in their driveway and they will turn red to allow them to get off their drives when they leave. Everything will be in sync.

“We are also asking for

By Clare Butler

the zebra crossing nearby to be turned into a pelican crossing. One of the biggest dangers has been that there is a school just down the road, we have had a lot of near misses and people tend to avoid it because they know how tricky it is.”

If the plans get the go ahead, Councillor Tranter said hopes that work could start at the end of July.

He added: “We are desperate for this to go ahead. Myself and Councillor Eaves will be present to discuss it.”

Around 56 letters were delivered to residents earlier this year stating the proposals. Thirteen emails were received in favour of the scheme, plus one objection. The scheme will be discussed by councillors today (Thursday).



Senior library supervisor Elaine Williams with library event organiser Judith Bate

Uke can do lots at our library

IT'S not all about books – that was the message from staff as they showcased all a library has to offer.

The event was held at Blackheath Library and visitors were able to find out about the whole range of different services and activities available to them, such as health and wellbeing events alongside arts activities.

Sessions included jewellery making and lessons on how to play the ukelele.

Among the library partners which attended included The Kaleidoscope Plus Group, a health and wellbeing charity.

Regular events that take place at the library include holiday activities for children, a reading group for adults, coffee mornings, a Scrabble club for adults, a colouring club for children, and meetings of Friends of Rowley Libraries Group.

MP calls for pledge on Iraq's future

A BLACK Country MP has called on Theresa May to work with the Iraqi government on the reconstruction of war cities such as Mosul.

Speaking at Prime Minister's Questions, Halesowen and Rowley Regis MP Mr James Morris asked for assurances that the UK and US is working on the reconstruction of Iraq once terrorist group Isis is forced out of the country.

Responding to the Tory MP, Mrs May said: “In order to keep the streets of Britain safe we must continue to attack Da'esh (Isis) in Iraq and Syria.

“The RAF has conducted over 1,400 strikes, there are over 500 British soldiers providing further assistance.

“It's about how we ensure there is sustainable reconstruction and rebuilding afterwards.”

N-ice gift on fan's birthday

A YOUNG Wolves fan enjoyed an eighth birthday treat when sent a hand-written card from her favourite player Jón Daði Böðvarsson.

Sydney Pritchard, of Rowley Regis, who visits Molineux alongside her father, Shaun, 38. She was stunned to find a card and signed photo from the Icelandic striker, known as the ‘Ice Man’, after Shaun told him via Facebook about Sydney's support.

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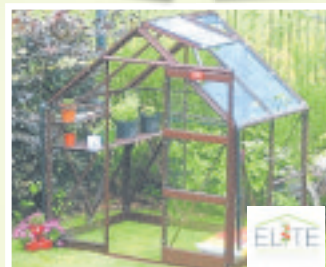
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It's a chance to make a difference – Jacqui

SHE was the first female Home Secretary in the country and now Jacqui Smith will try and turn around Sandwell's failing child services.

The former MP for Redditch, who was infamously embroiled in the expenses scandal, has started her job as chair of the board of the new Sandwell Children's Social Care Trust.

The Government funded independent body has taken over the service which has been 'inadequate' since 2013 under the control of Sandwell Council.

Ms Smith said: "I think the priorities are to make sure we have got the children's social workers in place, enough of them, who are suitably supported to take those really difficult decisions day-in and day-out that they have to take about keeping children safe and working with families."

Worrying

"That means there needs to be stability in the leadership of the service and one of the things that happens when services get into trouble is lots of people come in and go and there is lots of instability which is obviously worrying for staff."

The former teacher, from Malvern, now aged 54, was a Labour MP between 1997 and 2010 holding the posts of Schools Minister, Health Minister, Government Chief Whip as well as Home Secretary.

Since losing her seat she has chaired the University Hospitals Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust and served as interim chair at the Heart of England NHS Trust. Ms Smith is expected to be in her new role for four years de-



Former Home Secretary Jacqui Smith, who will chair the board of the new Sandwell Children's Social Care Trust, seen inside the council house chamber

claring she felt 'fortunate' and 'honoured' after applying for the position and being chosen.

She said: "I think it is important to be here for a period of time that enables us to make sure we have got the basics right but also the opportunity to innovate and think about how we might do things differently, how we work with our partners, how we support our social workers to really be able to develop their practice and come up with interesting ideas that the freedom of the trust model will enable us to put into place."

"I was a teacher for a number of years and then I was a minister in a number of departments including the Department for Education but also a period of time when I was responsible in the Department for Health for chil-

dren's social care, so I think that some of that puts me in good stead."

"I think the work I do currently across the West Midlands in the health service, the links that I have got to other agencies and public services, all of that I hope plus my now lengthy experience in developing policy and innovating public service, I hope all of that is what qualifies me to do the job and most of all I am really passionate about it. I think it is a really exciting opportunity to make a difference to the lives of children and families here in Sandwell."

Council leader Steve Eling, added: "I welcome Jacqui Smith's appointment as chair of the trust and look forward to working with her as we launch a fresh approach for children's social care services in Sandwell."

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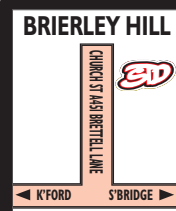
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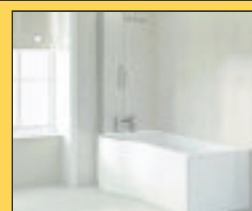


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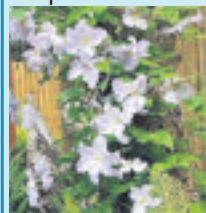
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Creative children have designs on competition



Design an ad winners, their guardians and sponsors in the ceremony at the Grand Theatre

ARTISTIC pupils showed off their prowess in the Express & Star's Design an Ad competition.

Around 1,000 youngsters produced their own advertisements for businesses across the region. Thanks to their creative efforts, 30 of the sponsors now have colourful and imaginative new ideas for ads.

Tracy Pearce, CEO of sponsors SIPS Education, said: "We were pleased by the creativity and hard work invested in each submission."

Each school was given a different business to create an ad for, and each

company chose one youngster from each school for top spot. The winning designs featured in The Chronicle's sister publication The Express & Star and readers voted for their favourite.

The winning 30 artists - including their guardians and sponsors - were invited to a ceremony at Wolverhampton Grand Theatre where each child was awarded a book voucher, certificate and a £50 achievement award for their school to use.

The overall winner, Erin Weston of Glynne Primary, Kingswinford - as voted by the readers - won £500 for her school. She was matched up with stationery manufacturer Helix Mapped.



Winner Erin Weston

Advertisement

My life-changer

No pain and no more multiple failing teeth | Speech now normal and perfectly clear | Stomach problems over and diet good

WHEN former university mental health lecturer Roy Philpott recognised involuntary changes in his social behaviour, he knew he needed help - and quickly.

"Below the radar," he says, "things were happening to my teeth in my early-60s and by the time I was 70, problems were visible and very acute."

But the issues were not just affecting his oral health. Studies of the mysterious collaborations between our bodies and minds have established medical links between failing teeth and mental wellbeing.

In Roy's case invasive gum disease had challenged his enthusiastic approach to retirement and not least his passion in working for the Guide Dogs charity.

A public speaker for the charity, he became aware of a "terrible self-consciousness" doing fundraising events.

Symptoms masked

"My normally clear speaking voice began to change and people were asking me to repeat what I'd said. On reflection, I was probably mumbling. Another strange thing for me was that I'd noticed I no longer smiled," he says.

During a period of three years he suffered numerous gum infections as the insidious disease saw him lose more and more teeth. "I'm a Black Country lad and typically Black Country folk cope and get on with things and that's just what I did," he adds.

When antibiotics failed to work he turned to alternative therapies and for a couple of years herbal prescriptions appeared to help.

However, in 2010, Roy recalls what he describes as a "turning point" in a downwards spiral that ultimately affected his ability to eat properly, his digestive system and social engagement. On holiday

in Scotland, Roy developed Bell's palsy, a partial paralysis of the face. "Treatment involved the prescription of steroids," he explains.

"Suddenly, all the problems with my teeth appeared to disappear, but of course

what really was happening, symptoms were being masked by the medication and the infection was still in the roots of my teeth. I thought it had gone, but it hadn't."

In less than a decade, Roy had lost more than 16 teeth and his diet had changed

dramatically. Embarrassing gaps meant he was able to chew on only one side and his healthy vegetarian diet, including his favourite apples, celery and grapes, was limited to soft food choices.

"My gums hurt, food impacted between my remaining teeth resulting in sideways pressure and more loosening, and I had to make conscious decisions not to stay in."

"There was no Pizza Hut for me and even a simple piece of toast I had to cut into small pieces. I was no longer really chewing food, just swallowing it and was experiencing stomach problems."

"I'd be chewing and a tooth would just fall out... I was not sleeping, had a partial denture I couldn't get on with and all I could think of was 'what on earth am I going to do?' I was desperate," he says.

Secure

Inspired by testimonials published in his local weekly newspaper, he sought help with Steven Burchell DipCDT RCS(Eng), principal of both North Street Dental and Implant Clinic and the Denture Clinic. "What an eye-opener!"

"He spent an hour with me on my first consultation," says Roy. Treatment involved the placing of four upper and four lower implants to secure over-dentures.

"Totally secure, hugely functional and natural looking - we were able to help Roy return to the spontaneous lifestyle he enjoyed before his troubles set in," says Steven.



Roy with his beloved Vonnie - the adopted labradoodle

Predictably reassuring

Roy's patient journey

My experience with Steven and his team was the best and getting the implants is money well spent. You need to be committed to the process, but the end results are well worth it.

- Roy Philpott

Other testimonials

Steven's demeanour and attitude to it all gave me the confidence and assurance that they could resolve my problem. Knowing that Owain was going to do the surgery was great.

- Norma Aston

When I first saw my teeth I thought they looked just like my real teeth. My husband couldn't believe they were so good. From start to finish it took 14 weeks, but it was worth the wait.

- Viki Ball

Life with Guide Dogs

GUIDE Dogs puppy walkers Roy and wife, Sue, are committed to changing lives in their work for the charity.

For more than seven years they have been the "foster parents" of puppies which later became fully trained guidedogs. Currently, the couple from Dudley, have a beautiful labradoodle - Vonnie - the "diva of the house," says Sue.

Vonnie, who suffered retina damage in an accident, had her guidedog career cut short, but was adopted by the Philpotts. Roy and Sue were family to Dudley, the celebrity labrador puppy who was sponsored by the mayor's charity. The practice has also supported Guide Dogs.

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Simple steps homeowners can take now to protect their assets.

Head of April King Legal Paul King explains why some homeowners are doing **too little, too late** to protect their hard-earned assets.

Care Cost Fees

"A lot of people are still unaware that if they need care in later life, their assets will be means-tested by the Local Authority to help pay for these services."

"The Local Authority will look to use the assets of a person until they get down to a lower limit of £14,250, when the Local Authority will take over the fees."

"For instance, my own grandmother sadly passed away recently at the age of 92. My grandfather had died many years earlier and left everything to her."

"When she needed care in the last six years of her life, because my grandfather had left everything to her, the house and all the estate was counted in the Local Authority's means test."

"Our clients tell us, 'We've worked hard all our lives, why should the Local Authority get it all?'"

"Just as she died, she had gone down to that lower limit of £14,250 and that's all her children inherited."

"There are many myths about the steps people can take to protect their assets from being used like this."

"The main one is that a parent should simply sign their house over to the children now, so it won't be taken into consideration for means testing. That's just not true."

"Local Authorities will actually look to see if you've 'deliberately deprived' yourself of an asset by giving property away, going back over any period in time."

"Sometimes people think that if the gift is made seven years prior then the house is safe. This is not so as the seven-year rule only applies to Inheritance Tax and not Local Authority care."

"The solution is for couples to simply not leave everything to each other in the first place."

"What my grandfather could have done is leave his half of the house in trust to his children, stating that they couldn't have it while his wife, my grandmother, was still alive. We call these Property Trust Wills."

"If my grandfather had left his half of the house in trust to the children then when my grandmother subsequently received care in her later life she would only have been means tested on her own half of the house, but my grandfather's half would have been safe."

"Why should he have to contribute his half when he didn't receive any care?"

"The important factor is that couples need to act in advance. Once one party dies or loses mental capacity, through a stroke for example, then they are no longer in a position to do this legitimate and straightforward type of planning."

"It is therefore important for couples to act now even if they may not foresee care fees being an issue."

Paul goes on to explain that most clients he sees are surprised to learn remarriage usually cancels a Will and makes the spouse next in line to inherit, ahead of their own children! Protecting your half of the house in this way, he suggests, ensures that your children ultimately inherit when the survivor dies.

"Had my grandmother remarried after the death of my grandfather the whole estate could have passed sideways out of the family," says Paul.

Lasting Power of Attorney

Paul explains how people often get confused thinking that, because they have made a Will, their executors can also deal with assets if there is illness, stroke or some other form of incapacity while they are still alive.

"Everyone should actually have two documents – a Will that deals with their estate on death, and a Lasting Power of Attorney that deals with their estate during their lifetime," he says.

"There are two types of Lasting Power of Attorney – one deals with finance, the other deals with health and welfare."

"In many ways it's similar to a passport; a document that's registered now and one which can be physically handed to the attorneys should the need arise."

"It allows the attorneys, perhaps the children, to deal with the banks and pension companies etc should their parent become incapacitated, but also to deal with matters such as where the parent should be living and how they should receive care."

"Your attorneys, again perhaps your children, must legally act in your best interests at all times."

"You can choose a number of attorneys to act, either jointly or independently, and April King advises on the various options available."

"Couples are often surprised to discover that even joint bank accounts can be frozen until the bank sees sight of a Lasting Power of Attorney document."

"Having a Lasting Power of Attorney removes the burden on children should ill health happen further down the line."

"It helps a family deal with bank accounts and so on during a parent's lifetime and ceases on death."

"Crucially, you have to complete a Lasting Power of Attorney while you are still in good mental health."

"If someone becomes ill through say, a stroke or dementia, this option is lost and the family would have to apply for a Deputyship Order from the Court of Protection – a drawn out and expensive process."

"It is therefore a good idea for clients to plan ahead and remove any future burden from the family."

"Once again, all adults should be thinking of this, particularly when there are children or a business involved."

"It's not just something to think about when you get older, that's the challenge for us."

"People think, 'I'm not ill, why do I need to make a Power of Attorney?' But they're missing the point. This is a document that has to be done in advance."



Paul King, Head of April King Legal

"The Lasting Power of Attorney remains in place until you die unless you want to cancel it."

"Once it's registered, you don't have to worry if you then develop some debilitating illness. A burden has been removed from the family at an already difficult time."

Bloodline Trust Wills

The majority of April King's clients have already made standard 'Mirror Wills' with other firms before approaching the Firm. A Mirror Will is when a couple leave everything to each other on the first death, then to the children when the second partner dies. But modern family life means these type of Wills leave a lot to chance.

Explains Paul: "If I have a Mirror Will leaving everything to my wife and she remarries or goes into care after my death then either the new husband or the Local Authority are likely to inherit most, if not all, of my estate ahead of my children."

"Even if my children are named in my Mirror Will, it is by no means certain that they will inherit anything."

"Once again, this is because a remarriage would cancel the Will my wife had previously made with me and make the new husband next-of-kin."

"This often comes as a big shock to my clients who had perhaps thought that all was in order and that the family bloodline would one day inherit."

"The same is true for thinking that their children and/or grandchildren will one day benefit under a Mirror Will."

"If any of your children should die leaving everything to their husband or wife and that son-in-law or daughter-in-law should then remarry, then your grandchildren would be the ones to lose out under the line of inheritance."

"Worse still, someone else's grandchildren would be in line to receive the benefit of all your years of hard work."

"I've experienced this in my own family and I'm sure most people have had similar experiences or heard of someone who has."

"Bloodline Trust Wills give greater protection to your children."

"These type of Wills not only give your children complete control and access to the inheritance they receive from you, they also grant added protection from the twists and turns of modern family life."

"The wording in these Wills states that any money left over on their demise must pass to any children born of them – your grandchildren."

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April King has prepared a free information pack for readers of the Halesowen Chronicle which is available by calling

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M5 Major Roadworks – if you use this road, your journey will be affected.

Please use M42 and M6 as an alternative route.

Since Easter, Highways England has been carrying out roadworks on the M5 J1-2 Oldbury Viaduct. This is all in preparation for a major concrete repair and waterproofing scheme. The work is going well and we'd like to thank you for your patience.

We are now starting the next phase of the work. To do this safely and efficiently we need to make some changes to the road layout and reduce speed limits.

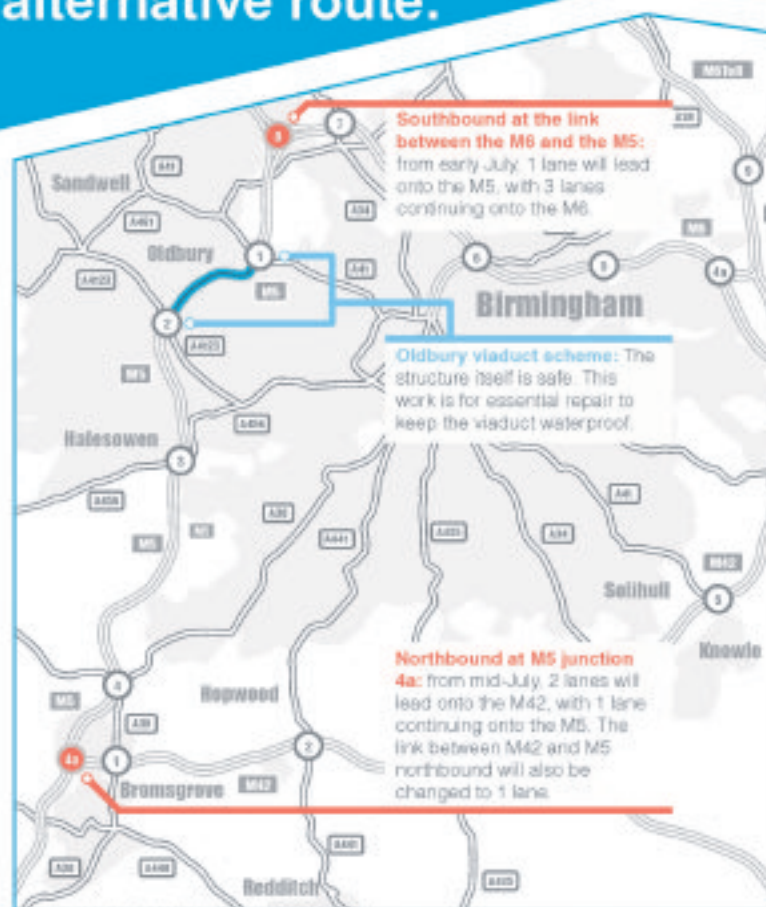
M5 junctions 1-2: for your safety there will be a contraflow system from early August. Traffic will be diverted onto the northbound carriageway, with 2 lanes in each direction and a 30mph speed limit.

There will also be changes at key junctions in the region, including at M6 junction 8 southbound and M5 junction 4a northbound. This is to increase capacity for the suggested M42/M6 alternative route and reduce the amount of traffic heading towards the roadworks. We understand this may not be welcome news, but this is needed to manage the volume of traffic through this busy part of the network. It will also reduce the potential impact on local roads.

To help you can:

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- work from home
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For more information about the scheme and alternative public transport:
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Have a say on Black Country's future

Commercial feature

People from across the Black Country are being encouraged to have their say on a review of the Black Country Core Strategy. Views are needed on how Black Country authorities can best meet housing, economic development and transport needs, as well as protecting the local environment to help shape the future of the area. Dudley, Sandwell, Walsall and Wolverhampton councils are all working together to achieve the very best future for local communities through the strategy which is a key planning and regeneration tool for the whole of the Black Country.

Investment

It plans for the area's future local development needs and directs services to the right locations to meet local needs. It also makes sure the necessary level of investment is attracted to create jobs and wealth in our region. The current strategy was adopted by the four councils in 2011. It has shaped the housing, industrial and retail growth of the area, whilst protecting the environment and greenbelt. It has also been successful in supporting regeneration for the past six years. The strategy now needs to be reviewed to meet the new challenges and opportunities for the coming years, up to 2036. A public consultation will make sure that everyone across the Black Country has the opportunity to have their say on the plans for the area. The new core strategy will provide the framework for growth and development across the Black Country up to 2036. It is really important that people who live and



Views are being sought on how best to protect the environment as the strategy is reviewed

work in the area help shape it, so it reflects the aspirations of local people. There are ten key issues that people's views are being sought on: meeting housing needs, supporting the economy, supporting town centres, protecting the environment, reviewing the green belt, keeping the Black Country connected, providing community facilities to support growth, people's health and wellbeing, working with our neighbours and regeneration across the Black Country. Around 78,000 new homes need to be built in the Black Country over the next 20 years. There are enough brownfield sites to deliver around

56,000 homes, but new plots of land need to be found for an extra 22,000 homes as the population and economy of the area continues to grow. There is also a need to find new employment land to expand the economy and create jobs. We need to decide where this development should go. Making the most of brownfield land remains the top priority, however, in the coming decades sites like this are going to run out and the green belt will need to be reviewed to find more development sites to meet future needs. Decisions also need to be made about



The strategy will also look at retail growth, employment and the economy

the infrastructure required to support new development, including transport, schools and shops. The consultation is open until September 8 2017. It's easy to take part by visiting blackcountrycorestrategy.dudley.gov.uk where all the documents are available to read and people can fill in a questionnaire online. A leaflet, which includes a prepaid questionnaire, is also available at local libraries. Please email blackcountrycorestrategy@dudley.gov.uk or call 01384 814136 for more details. Consultation events will be running across

the Black Country throughout the consultation period, dates and venues for these are detailed below. As part of the consultation, there is also a "Call for Sites" where people can put forward areas of land they feel may be suitable for development. When the consultation closes all feedback will be collated, considered and used to help develop the next stage of the strategy – which will identify key locations for future development. The views of local people will help plan for the very best future for the Black Country.

Black Country | Core Strategy

Planning for the future of the Black Country

The Black Country needs your voice to help us move forward together

We need to make big decisions on important issues that will affect the Black Country, our home, up to 2036

Your views will help us plan the very best future for our Black Country

Public consultation 3 July to 8 September 2017



HOUSING



ENVIRONMENT



EMPLOYMENT



TRANSPORT

Don't miss your chance to have your say by visiting blackcountrycorestrategy.dudley.gov.uk or emailing blackcountrycorestrategy@dudley.gov.uk to give us your views



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Metropolitan Borough Council



Sandwell
Metropolitan Borough Council



Walsall Council



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Black Country - See it in colour

Consultation events

Saturday 15 July (11am-4pm) Dudley Black Country Festival, Stone Street and Stone Street Square, Dudley DY1 1NT

Saturday 15 July (10am-1pm) Penn Library, Coalway Avenue, Penn WV3 7LT

Monday 17 July (1.30pm-5.30pm) Blackheath Library, Blackheath

Tuesday 18 July (10am-2pm) City of Wolverhampton Council, Main Reception, Civic Centre WV1 1RP

Wednesday 19 July (4-7pm) Bilston Library, Mount Pleasant, Bilston WV14 7LU

Thursday 20 July (10am-2pm) City of Wolverhampton Council, Main Reception, Civic Centre WV1 1RP

Friday 21 July (1-7pm) Walsall Council House, Lichfield Street, Walsall, WS1 1TW

Saturday 22 July (11am-4pm) Brier Fair, High Street, Brierley Hill DY5 3AP

Saturday 22 July (10am-1pm) Collingwood Library, Broadway Gardens, The Broadway, Bushbury WV10 8EB

Saturday 22 July (2-4pm) Tettenhall Library, St. Michael's Parish Centre, Upper Street, Tettenhall WV6 8QF

Wednesday 26 July (1pm-5.30pm) Willenhall Chart, 19 Gomer Street, Willenhall, WV13 2NS

Friday, 28 July (11am-4pm) Rye Market Shopping Centre, Stourbridge DY8 1HJ

Tuesday 1 August (1.30-7pm) Aldridge Community Centre, Anchor Meadow, Middlemore Lane, Aldridge WS9 8AN

Wednesday 9 August (1-7pm) Bloxwich Library Theatre, Elmore Row, Bloxwich, WS3 2HR

Thursday 10 August (3-7pm) Wednesbury Town Hall, Holyhead Road, Wednesbury WS10 7DF

Tuesday 15 August (3-7pm) The Brasshouse Centre, Smethwick B66 1BA

Thursday 24 August (11am-4pm) Cornbow Shopping Centre, Halesowen B63 4AB

Saturday 2 September (10am-4pm) New Square, West Bromwich B70 7PP

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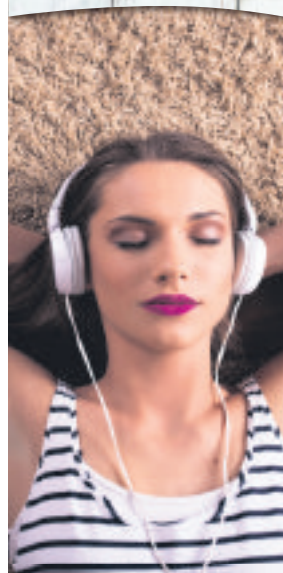
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Just Grand! Theatre's new line-up announced

FORMER EastEnders star Phil Daniels will be one of the star attractions during the Grand Theatre's new season of shows.

Highlights include Daniels in Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde, on-stage dinner with Christopher Biggins, comedian Jim Davidson's stand-up show, a Grand production of Turn of the Screw and the return of smash-hit musical Jersey Boys.

Bosses promise a selection of West End musicals, gripping dramas, dynamic dance and one-night concerts.

Daniels, aged 58, stars in Robert Louis Stevenson's gothic thriller from May 1 to 5 next year. He is known for roles including Jimmy Cooper in Quadrophenia, Richards in Scum and Kevin Wicks in EastEnders.

Elaborate

On October 27, the theatre will host an elaborate dinner on stage with Biggins, presented by Midlands Today's Nick Owen.

The 33-piece British Philharmonic Concert Orchestra will perform at the venue on January 12, while the Roy Orbison Story will see Barry Steele recreate the vocal talents of the music legend.

Controversial comic Davidson will take to the stage on February 1, while The Lionel Richie Songbook on March 6 will see musicians indulge in a two-hour show featuring all the performer's greatest hits.

Two Strictly Come Dancing stars, Brendan Cole and Pasha Kovalev will take the stage for separate shows, while 80s Mania will see a throwback to chart-topping tunes from the decade, with a Queen tribute show hitting



Strictly dancer Pasha Kovalev



Comedian Jim Davidson



Christopher Biggins



Phil Daniels in Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde

the Grand on March 30. Champions of Rock, the Supreme Queen Concert Show will see two hours of rocking hits. Musical 'Crazy for You' starring Tom Chambers and Charlotte Wakefield runs from May 8 to 12.

A show celebrating the best of David

Bowie (Bowie Experience – The Golden Years Tour) takes place on June 8 and Thoroughly Modern Millie will have a five-day run from June 26 to 30.

Tickets can be purchased by calling 01902 429212, in person at the box office or online at grandtheatre.co.uk

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Saying farewell to one of their fallen comrades during a Boer War funeral service



A group of soldiers pose for the camera in the early 1900s



Bodies strewn across a battlefield during the Boer War

Revealed: Images of one man's Boer War

THEY are haunting images of the Boer War, all found in a fascinating time capsule put together by a former serviceman from the West Midlands.

The pictures, which have never been seen by the public before and include photographs of bodies on the battlefield, were discovered in a time capsule created by Robert Oliver.

They also show the funeral of a British serviceman together with the aftermath of the destruction caused by battle.

Mr Oliver fought in the conflict, which started in 1899 and ended in 1902, and was awarded the Queen's medal for South Africa after fighting in Cape Colony, the Orange Free State, the Transvaal and South Africa in 1901 and 1902.

After leaving the army he moved to Staffordshire, where he joined the county's police force.

His capsule of memorabilia, which

MEMORY LANE

Report by Jack Avery

was discovered in a house in Derby, also includes medals, hats and gloves will now be sold by auctioneer Charles Hanson

Mr Oliver's collection forms part of a Militaria sale, which will be held on July 25 and could fetch up to £1,000.

Mr Hanson said: "The collection is quite remarkable since it contains two pairs of original kid gloves, spurs, an ammunition bandolier, caps and hats, Queens and Kings South African medals.

"It also contains a glazed portrait of Robert Oliver, a photo album of unpublished personal photos of the war, a powder flask, cap badges, an original South African feathered headdress, a cartridge belt and other items.

"It really is quite an archive. We know from the family that Robert Oliver was quite a rogue in his youth. At the age of 16, he ran away, ending up

on a ship to Canada where he found work as a lumberjack. He later joined Staffordshire Police and our client's memory of him was that he was funny but firm and strict. Later in life he became a landlord, owning the Devonshire pub in Hartington.

"The photographs, never seen publicly before, comprise amazing images of a war which took a horrific number of lives.

"They include pictures of a Boer War dog, an observation balloon at Ladysmith and General Buller. There are also images of Boers and their homes, together with graphic images recording the harsh reality, and true horror, of war – something the Victorian press did not portray at the time, as the British Empire was deemed undefeatable. Britain went into the Boer War over-confident and under-prepared. The Boers were well armed and these guerrilla fighters carried out surprise attacks on the British, as, without uniforms, they blended easily into the farmlands which also provided hiding places for supplies and horses."



A Boer War dog used as a mascot for the soldiers

An officer, with his uniform including baton and bullet belt

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Everything I do, is for a love of music

He's been nominated for 17 Grammy Awards, has been inducted into the Canadian Music Hall of Fame and received a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame in 2011.

Bryan Adams is a multi-platinum rock legend, who rose to fame with a string of huge hits in the 1980s including Summer of '69, Run to You and Heaven.

He's sold more than 100 million records and his 1991 single, (Everything I Do) I Do It For You remains a UK record-breaker, having spent 16 consecutive weeks at number one.

And yet for all of the success that Bryan has enjoyed in his 42-year career, he steadfastly refuses to look back. Bryan doesn't bother thinking about what he's done - he thinks about what he's about to do.

And this summer that's involved a series of sell out gigs around the UK as part of an open-air tour that has thrilled tens of thousands of fans.

Adams will bring his show to Worcester's Sixways Stadium tonight and fans can look forward to a slew of greatest hits.

He's looking forward to the show: "I'm delighted to be continuing my tour and heading to Worcester. It will give me an opportunity to perform tracks from my latest album Get Up as well as some of my earlier classics. It's going to be a special show and I hope my fans are able to join me."

Get Up helped to revitalise Bryan's career after he worked on the project with ELO mainman-cum-producer, Jeff Lynne. It was his 14th studio album and was his first recording of new material since 2008's 11.

The record was the product of an international record experience, with Bryan, Lynne and fellow collaborator Jim Vallance emailing one another work.

Bryan says: "It came together quite organically, song by song, working with Jeff producing over the past couple of years whenever he had time. It was a great partnership as it gave me plenty of time to write the songs, most of which are a collaboration with Jim Vallance. We all worked primarily over the internet from Canada, Europe and LA, sending demos and parts of songs until we got it right."

Bryan was delighted to work with Lynne, who is one of his friends.

"A friend of mine is also a friend of his. We were just talking, and I said, 'Oh, if you see Jeff, say hi from me'. He said, 'I will'. Then I got a message back: 'Oh, Jeff wants you to call him when you get to L.A. sometime... So I called, [then] went up and saw him."

"Jeff said, 'Do you wanna cut a track sometime?'. I said, 'Yeah'."

"He did what I would imagine he does in any project that he's done: He sort of becomes a member of the band. In this case, on the majority of the tracks he produced on this album, he is the band. I had wanted to work with Jeff for a long time. When it finally happened I was elated."

The results were instant and Bryan enjoyed making the record. He was glad that he'd had a long spell between records - with only a covers album, Tracks of My Years, being released since 2008.

Bryan's manager Bruce Allen gives his charge plenty of time to come up with new ideas. He never hassles Bryan and leaves him to wait until the spirit moves him, before making a new record.

"Well, I'm always making

Summer of 2017 - Adams will play songs from his latest album



songs, and what drives you isn't the past; what drives you is the future and what you're creating next. That's how I think about it. I don't think about what I've done; I think about what I'm about to do.

"I always have to try and find time to write. I've been working on songs. I have songs on my Bare Bones record, I have songs on my Tracks of My Years record. I have songs on my Sydney Opera House record. I have lots of new songs coming out. Get Up was the first sort of comprehensive [album]."

The record emerged out of nowhere. Initially, Bryan was only planning to record one song. But he was so happy with that that he carried on and made the whole record.

"When I heard the first track we did played back, I thought, 'Wow, we can't just stop here'."

I kept asking him to do more songs. That is how

the album came about. I never actually said, 'Hey, can you produce my album?'. "We did a track together, and one by one it grew. I would say, 'Wanna do another track?' He always said, 'Well, I've got my album to do'. I said, 'That's OK. Whenever you've got time'. I was in no hurry."

Many 1980s artists have gone down the nostalgia route, opting to play the old

Well, I'm always making songs, what drives you is what you're creating next

hits and keep the flame alive. But Bryan has travelled in a different direction. He's been deliberately finding new things to do so that he remains fresh and relevant to the modern idiom. He has no intention of trading on former glories and prefers to take photographs, play gigs and engage in philanthropic work.

"I was asked to go the nostalgia route, as you would call it, on the last album, 'Tracks of My Years', which I was reluctant to do. I would literally leave one studio where I was recording the covers with David Foster, and go to another studio where I was working on the new album with Jeff. That gave me the impetus to get through the Foster record, because I didn't enjoy that at all."

"I did it because my management and record company wanted me to. I got into it in the end. And David is a brilliant producer - nothing against him. It just wasn't something I really wanted to do. It was funny literally leaving one studio thinking 'ugh', then going into the [next] studio going 'ah!' It wasn't for the 'ah!' moments, I wouldn't have gotten through the 'ugh' moments."

● For more entertainment news and reviews see **The Ticket** in your Express & Star every Friday.



Ashley Shaw in the Red Shoes



Back by demand, Red Shoes cast steps out

FOLLOWING sell-out dates just five months ago, Matthew Bourne's ballet production of *The Red Shoes* returns to Birmingham Hippodrome next week.

From the beloved Hans Christian Andersen fairytale and Academy-award winning movie by Michael Powell and Eric Pressburger, dates in February sold out in record breaking time. Now the show is returning due to phenomenal demand.

The Red Shoes has seduced audiences and inspired generations of dancers with its tale of obsession, possession and one girl's dream to be the greatest dancer in the world. Victoria Page lives to dance but her ambitions become a battleground

between the two men who inspire her passion.

New Adventures star Ashley Shaw, who also featured as Aurora in Bourne's production of *Sleeping Beauty*, takes on the role immortalised on the big screen by Moira Shearer.

Bourne's magical new adaptation of the legendary film reunites the team behind New Adventures' worldwide hit, *Sleeping Beauty* and is set to a new score arranged by Terry Davies, using the mesmerising music of golden-age Hollywood composer Bernard Hermann.

The Red Shoes runs on Wednesday and Thursday, July 19 and 20, with four performances in all, at 2pm and 7.30pm each day. For tickets see www.birminghamhippodrome.com or call 0844 338 5000.

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Managers Paul and Carol always ensure a warm welcome to customers both old and new at Blackheath's Shoulder of Mutton pub.

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Loyalty

The pub itself boasts a wide range of ciders, lagers, wines and spirits including four 'Real Ales' which they rotate weekly. Regulars very often enjoy ales such as Bathams, AJ Ales, Oakham, JHB, Stairway To Heaven and MA Pardoes Entire, plus many more!

The pub also run a loyalty scheme which means customers can get 10p back on their card for every pound they spend.

A pub spokesman added: "With a juke box and free WIFI to compliment the regular entertainment every Friday, customers cannot ask for much more from a local pub!"

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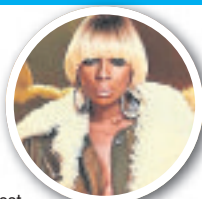


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Soulful sounds? Mary J will o-Blige



ICONIC Grammy award-winning singer, songwriter and actress Mary J. Blige is one of the defining voices of contemporary music and brings her soulful sound to the 02 Academy in Birmingham this weekend.

With a track record of eight multi-platinum albums, nine Grammy Awards, a 2012 Golden Globe nomination and five American Music Awards, Blige, born in The Bronx, has attracted an intensely loyal fan base and has sold more than 50 million albums worldwide.

In recent years, Blige has turned to acting, starring in *Rock of Ages*, alongside Tom Cruise, Alec Baldwin and Russell Brand in 2012. A year later, she starred as Betty Shabazz in the TV movie *Betty & Coretta*, a biographical story about the widows of Malcolm X and Martin Luther King Jr.

In November 2013 she appeared as the mysterious guardian angel Platinum Fro in the holiday musical film *Black Nativity*. Ramping up her acting career, Blige has guest-starred on the ABC comedy, *Black-ish* and the FOX musical drama *Empire* and as well as playing Evillene, the Wicked Witch

of the West, on the NBC musical, *The Wiz LIVE!*

Blige, pictured, most recently guest starred on ABC's, *How to Get Away with Murder* and is starring in *Mudbound*, opposite Carey Mulligan and Garrett Hedlund, which premiered to rave reviews this year at Sundance.

She performs at the Horse Fair venue in the Second City on Saturday night in support of her latest release, *Strength of a Woman*. For ticket information, call 0121 622 8250 or visit www.academymusicgroup.com/o2academybirmingham

Hue and Cry over date at Robin

US 'bubblegum punk' outfit The Dickies are celebrating 40 years in the business – and mark the occasion with an anniversary gig at Wolverhampton's Slade Rooms on July 22. Call 0870

320 7000 or visit boxoffice@wolvescivic.co.uk

Elsewhere, brothers Pat and Greg Kane, alias Hue & Cry, pictured, perform at the Robin 2, Bilston on Sunday night, supported by Craig Pate.

Canadian singer/songwriter Lee Aaron performs at the Mount Pleasant venue on Monday, with support from Iconic Eye. On Wednesday, talented Lisa Mills takes the stage. Pete Boddiss supports. Call 01902 497860 or visit www.therobin.co.uk



Legends team up for one night only

Two entertainment veterans combine for a one-night only evening in Wolverhampton next weekend. Legends Des O'Connor and Jimmy Tarbuck come together, accompanied by music and video to reminisce at the Grand Theatre, Lichfield Street on July 22. Tickets for the 7.30pm show range in price from £17.50 to £37.50.

Meanwhile, there's still Room on the Broom to join the witch and her cat on their mission to defeat the dragon in Tall Stories' musical adaptation of the Julia Donaldson and Axel Scheffler book.

The Olivier Award-winning show features songs, laughs and scary fun for children aged three and upwards. It runs on July 17 (4.30pm) and 18 (10.30am and 4.30pm), with tickets from £12.50 to £14. Call 01902 429212 or visit www.grandtheatre.co.uk

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Paul O'Grady

Blind Date
(Channel 5, 8pm)
Paul O'Grady plays cupid for 50-year-old Bournemouth Post Office manager Gary, who claims his loud shirts help him stand out from the crowd. Also seeking love is student Amy from Leeds, who works in a pub, and is nicknamed 'Dolly Daydream' by the punters due to her mind's tendency to wander. Both are given a chance to quiz their three potential sweethearts, before choosing one to spend more time with. Plus, Paul catches up with last week's couples.

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. **10.00** Saturday Kitchen Live. **11.30** Mary Berry Cooks. (R) **12.00** BBC News: Weather. **12.15** Bargain Hunt. (R) **1.00** Wimbledon 2017. Sue Barker presents coverage of the ladies' singles final.
6.25 **BBC News.**
6.35 **Regional Programme.**
6.45 **Pointless Celebrities.** (R)
7.30 **Pitch Battle.** The choral music contest reaches its fifth heat, as another six diverse groups seek to demonstrate their vocal skills. This time, the ensembles are young chamber choir Tring Park 16, West Midlands-based musical theatre enthusiasts Crescendo, Oxford University a capella group Oxford Alternatives, classical quintet Vox-xover, all-girl pop ensemble Vocalities, and Dublin barbershop choir The Ramparts. Each group is given a chance to display their speciality with a "showstopper" performance, before battling it out with their rivals in a themed "riff-off". Guest judge Joe Jonas joins Gareth Malone and Kelis on the panel. Postponed from Saturday 8th July.
9.00 **Casualty.** Part one of two. Tensions between Jez, Iain, Mickey and Scott look set to reach fever pitch after Mickey is brought in to the ED, having been injured during a police chase following a race-related assault on a shopkeeper. Desperate to keep his relationship secret from his hardline brother Scott, Mickey puts on a front and insults Jez, but when Iain realises Scott has intimidated the shopkeeper's wife into silence, he decides to make use of his knowledge to ensure justice is done. Meanwhile, Max takes an interest in attractive mortuary assistant Tara during a speed-dating session at the Hope & Anchor, but the situation becomes complicated after Tara faints, resulting in an illuminating trip back to the hospital.
9.50 **BBC News:** Weather.; National Lottery Update.
10.10 **Film: Die Hard with a Vengeance.** (1995) New York cop John McClane pursues a terrorist threatening to set off a series of bombs around the city. Action thriller sequel, with Bruce Willis and Samuel L Jackson.
12.10 Weather for the Week Ahead.
12.15 BBC News.

BBC2

6.35 **Film:** Sylvia Scarlett. (1935) **8.05** **Film:** A Walk in the Sun. (1945) **10.00** Monty Halls' Great Irish Escape. (R) **11.00** Wimbledon Wheelchair Finals. **12.30** Harry Bikers' Best of British. (R) **1.15** **Film:** Forbidden Planet. (1956) Sci-fi drama, starring Walter Pidgeon. **2.55** Wanted Down Under. (R) **3.40** Natural World: Tiger Island. (R) **4.40** Flog It! (R) **5.25** Gardeners' World. (R) **6.25** **Wimbledon 2017.** Sue Barker presents coverage of the men's and ladies' doubles finals from the All England Club, as the penultimate day of action at this year's event draws to a conclusion. The men's final in 2016 was an all-French affair, with top seeds Nicolas Mahut and Pierre-Hugues Herbert defeating Julien Benneteau and Edouard Roger-Vasselin in straight sets. In the ladies' final, just hours after her singles final victory over Angelique Kerber, Serena Williams paired up with sister Venus to take the title for a sixth time.
8.00 **Today at Wimbledon.** Clare Balding presents highlights of the penultimate day's play from the All England Club, where the ladies' singles final took centre stage on Centre Court. The host also casts her eye over the men's and ladies' doubles finals, as the famous event drew ever closer to a finish.
9.00 **Imagine: Chris O'ili – The Caged Bird's Song.** Alan Yentob catches up with Turner Prize-winning painter Chris O'ili, whose latest work The Caged Bird's Song is a tribute to the Trinidadian landscape, hand-woven in wool.
10.00 **Mock the Week.** Topical comedy quiz show. (R)
10.30 **QI XL.** Ciarad Lloyd, Dermot O'Leary and Phill Jupitus compete alongside resident panellist Alan Davies, as Stephen Fry hosts an extended edition of the quiz show.
11.15 **Live at the Apollo.** Sitcom star and The Last Leg regular Josh Widdicombe welcomes Londoner Nathan Caton and Australian comic Celia Pacquola to the stage at London's Hammersmith Apollo. (R)
11.45 **Golf: Scottish Open.** Eilidh Barbour presents highlights of the third round of the European Tour event at Dundonald Links in Troon, Ayrshire.
12.45 **Film: Salvage.** (2009) **2.00** This Is BBC Two.

ITV

6.00 CITY: Grizzly Tales for Gruesome Kids. **6.10** Grizzly Tales for Gruesome Kids. (R) **6.20** Sooty. (R) **6.30** Signed Stories: Share a Story. (R) **6.35** Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures. (R) **6.50** Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures. (R) **7.00** Oddbods. (R) **7.05** Super 4. (R) **7.20** Marvel Avengers Assemble. (R) **7.45** Thunderbirds Are Go. (R) **8.10** Ben 10. **8.25** ITV News. **8.30** Weekend. **9.25** The Voice Kids. (R) **10.50** **Film:** Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban. (2004) **1.25** ITV News: Weather. **1.35** ITV Racing: Live from Newmarket. Coverage of from York, Ascot and Newmarket. **5.00** Paul O'Grady: For the Love of Dogs. (R) **5.30** Little Big Shots USA.
6.25 **Regional Programme:** Weather.
6.35 **ITV News:** Weather.
6.45 **Catchphrase.** Stephen Mulhern hosts the game show, asking contestants Emma, Ashley and May to "see it and say it" as they try to guess the familiar phrases hidden in animated clues. After the first elimination, the two remaining players battle to reach the Super Catchphrase round, where one of them could win £50,000.
7.30 **The Voice Kids Semi-Final.** After weeks of auditions, and a full weekend of battles, the 12 remaining contestants now enter the semi-finals. Emma Willis presents as the junior singers once again step onto the stage to perform for coaches Danny Jones, Pixie Lott and Will.i.am, who each have four singers still in the running, and must cut two from their teams. As the grand final, the £30,000 prize, and the family holiday to Disneyland Paris draw ever closer, the young would-be pop icons must conquer their nerves and deliver their best performances yet.
9.30 **ITV News:** Weather.
9.45 **Film: Inception.** (2010) Premiere. A talented thief uses hi-tech devices to enter other people's dreams so he can steal their secrets. An industrialist hires him to perform a far more challenging job – to implant an idea into a corporate heir's mind, so he will think it is his own. However, the mission is compromised by the thief's own troubled psyche. Christopher Nolan's sci-fi thriller, starring Leonardo DiCaprio.
12.30 The Chase. (R) **1.25** Jackpot247. **3.00** Who's Doing the Dishes? (R) **3.50** ITV Nightscreen.

CHANNEL 4

6.40 Triathlon: Cardiff. **7.05** Motor Sport: British GT. **7.30** Frasier. (R) **7.55** Frasier. (R) **8.25** Frasier. (R) **8.50** F1 Meets Claire Williams. (R) **9.20** F1 Meets Toto Wolff. (R) **9.55** Formula 1 British Grand Prix Practice 3. Coverage of the third practice session. **11.25** F1 Meets Nigel Mansell. **11.55** Formula 1 British Grand Prix Qualifying Live. Coverage of the qualifying session at Silverstone (Start-time 1.00pm). **2.30** World's Most Expensive Cars. **3.30** A Place in the Sun: Winter Sun. (R) **4.35** Big House, Little House. **5.35** Kirstie and Phil's Love It or List It. (R)
6.30 **Channel 4 News.**
7.00 **World Para Athletics Championships London 2017.** Lee McKenzie, Arthur Williams and Ade Adepitan introduce coverage of the evening session on day two of the Championships, taking place at The London Stadium in Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park. A number of finals are scheduled to take place on the track this evening, including the men's T42 200m, T46 1500m and T11 5,000m, as well as the 100m in the T11, T12, T33, T34 and T47 categories. The 200m is set to dominate proceedings in the women's competition, with gold medals awarded in the T37, T38, T47, T53 and T54 categories. With expert analysis from Danny Crates, Sophia Warner, Liam Malone, and Ellie Robinson.
10.00 **Film: The Hunger Games.** (2012) A teenage girl in a dystopian future-America is forced to fight in a televised battle to the death. Sci-fi adventure, starring Jennifer Lawrence and Josh Hutcherson.
12.45 Ramsay's Hotel Hell. Gordon Ramsay visits a dog-friendly hotel in urgent need of help. (R) **1.35** 60 Days in Jail. Eight more volunteers go undercover as inmates in Clark County Jail, Indiana. (R) **2.25** Hollyoaks. Omnibus. Granny Campbell wants Courtney to come back to Scotland and Grace freaks Warren out, while Darren plans a special foreign film night for Nancy. **4.25** Ackley Bridge. Mandy's personal and professional lives collide when Alya reveals her and Sadiq's affair at the school's first Open Day. Last in the series. (R) **5.20** Location, Location, Location. Kirstie Allsopp and Phil Spencer head to Sheffield, where they search for a local general practice and try to find the ideal property for a firefighter and his wife to settle down in. (R)

CHANNEL 5

6.00 Milkshake! **10.15** Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. **10.30** Pets Make You Laugh Out Loud 2. (R) **11.10** Police Interceptors. (R) **12.10** Bargain-Loving Brits in the Sun. (R) **1.10** Bargain-Loving Brits in the Sun. (R) **2.05** The Nightmare Neighbour Next Door. (R) **3.05** The Nightmare Neighbour Next Door. (R) **4.00** Can't Pay? We'll Take It Away. (R) **5.00** Can't Pay? We'll Take It Away. (R) **6.00** **Can't Pay? We'll Take It Away.** High Court enforcement officers Paul Bohill and Steve and Ben Pinner face their biggest eviction yet – taking on squatters in a large central London office block. With the help of the police, they try to remove a suspected group of 70 from the building, but with a barricade in place, the team faces a challenging operation ahead. Elsewhere, officers are confronted by an army of family and friends when they attempt to enforce a writ at the property of a debtor, and face a difficult eviction at the north London home of a heavily pregnant tenant and her family, after the council fails to pay the rent to the landlord. (R)
6.55 **5 News Weekend.**
7.00 **Cricknet on 5.** England v South Africa. Highlights of the second day's play in the Second Test of the four-match series, which took place at Trent Bridge in Nottingham. With commentary by Graeme Smith, Geoffrey Boycott, Simon Hughes, Michael Vaughan and Mark Nicholas.
8.00 **Blind Date.** Paul O'Grady plays cupid for a 50-year-old Post Office manager from Bournemouth and a student from Leeds, before catching up with last week's couples.
9.00 **Big Brother.** Daily round-up of highlights, featuring more games, arguments, laughs, diary room visits and bedroom chat-chat.
10.00 **FIA Formula E: New York.** The first New York ePrix race. Action from the first of two races staged at the Brooklyn Street Circuit in New York, which served as the ninth round of the season.
11.30 **Criminals: Caught on Camera.** Nick Wallis joins police forces across the country to reveal how CCTV and technological advances are helping to ensure convictions against shoplifters. (R)
12.00 SuperCasino. **3.10** Film: Sniper. (1993) **4.50** Great Artists. (R)

DIGITAL

BBC Four
7.00 Britain's Lost Waterlands: Escape to Swallows and Amazons Country **8.00** The Last Seabird Summer? **9.00** I Know Who You Are **11.20** Top of the Pops: 1984 **11.55** TOTP2: Boy Bands **12.50** Rollermania: Britain's Biggest Boy Band **1.50** The Richest Songs in the World **3.25** TOTP2: Boy Bands **4.20** Close
ITV2
11.10 Take Me Out **12.20** The Voice Kids **1.50** You've Been Framed! Gold: The Next Generation **2.55** Film: The Smurfs (2011) **3.55** FYI Daily **4.00** Film: The Smurfs (2011) **5.00** Film: St Trinian's 2: The Legend of Fritton's Gold (2009) **6.00** FYI Daily **6.05** Film: St Trinian's 2: The Legend of Fritton's Gold (2009) **7.10** Film: Gravity (2013) **8.10** FYI Daily **8.15** Film: Gravity (2013) **9.00** Love Island: The Weekly Hot List **10.00** Celebrity Juice: Massive Election Special **10.50** Family Guy **12.20** American Dad! **1.15** Film: Scary Movie 4 (2006) **2.15** FYI Daily **2.20** Film: Scary Movie 4 (2006) **2.45** Teleshopping **5.45** ITV2 Nightscreen
ITV3
11.50 Goodbye Mr Chips **1.55** Wycliffe **3.00** Lewis **5.05** Agatha Christie's Marple **9.00** Foyle's War **11.00** Law & Order: UK **2.00** ITV3 Nightscreen **2.30** Teleshopping
ITV4
11.00 Tour de France Highlights **12.00** Tour de France Live. Coverage of stage 14 of the most prestigious race on the calendar. **5.00** Better Late Than Never **6.00** Monster Carp **7.00** Tour de France Highlights **8.50** Live World Series of Darts: Las Vegas. Coverage of the concluding day of the event. **12.00** Dirtquake Motorbike Festival **1.00** Tour de France Highlights **2.00** BRDC Formula 3 Championship Highlights **2.50** ITV4 Nightscreen **3.00** Teleshopping
E4
1.00 The Goldbergs **3.00** Film: 101 Dalmatians (1996) **5.00** The Big Bang Theory **9.00** Film: Salt (2010) **11.00** Gogglebox **1.05** Tattoo Fixers **2.10** Rude Tube: OMGF **3.05** Gogglebox **4.00** New Girl **4.25** How I Met Your Mother **5.10** Rude(ish) Tube
Film4
11.00 Night Passage (1957) **1.00** Baggage Claim (2013) **2.50** Tooth Fairy (2010) **4.50** A League of Their Own (1992) **7.20** Men in Black II (2002) **9.00** X-Men: Days of Future Past (2014) **11.35** Evil Dead (2013) **1.30** The Duke of Burgundy (2014) **3.40** Close

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CHOICE



Laura Fraser

The Loch (ITV, 9pm)
A body is pulled from the Loch and soon identified by the pathologist – while a photograph in the dead man's wallet provides Annie and Quigley with a vital clue. Annie tries to gather further evidence by talking to a desperate Mhari, who refuses to believe the terrifying possibility she is presented with concerning her own son. Albrighton is threatened with arrest by Quigley, but nevertheless continues to pursue his own theory about the killings – even if it means putting his life on the line to prove himself right. Last in the series.

BBC1

9.00 The Andrew Marr Show. **10.00** Sunday Morning Live. **11.00** Regional Programme. **12.15** BBC News: Weather. **12.30** Bargain Hunt. (R) **1.00** Wimbledon 2017. Previewing the men's singles final. **1.50** Wimbledon 2017. Coverage of the men's singles final. **6.30** BBC News. **6.50** Regional Programme. **7.00** Countryfile. Ellie Harrison visits a Scottish island that is home to the largest puffin colony on Britain's east coast, and Sean Fletcher investigates the history of fruit growing in Fife. Plus, Tom Heap reports on the spread of bovine TB among goats and Adam Henson joins a member of ordnance survey as he maps field margins. **8.00** Fake or Fortune? Fiona Bruce and art experts Philip Mould and Bendor Grosvenor come to the aid of a man who has inherited three paintings that he believes were painted by LS Lowry. However, he cannot prove whether they are the genuine article, and since Lowry is the British artist whose work is most frequently forged, it will take a great deal of evidence to convince the art establishment of their value. The search for the truth leads to a discovery that challenges established beliefs about the artist's life. (R) **9.00** Poldark. Ross gives some of Nampara's land to the peasants so that they can provide for themselves, while he and Demelza also come to the aid of Dwight, who is terribly traumatised by his experiences of imprisonment in France. George tries to force Nampara into marriage to further his political ambitions – an arrangement that Geoffrey unwittingly lets slip to Drake. **10.00** BBC News. **10.20** Regional Programme. **10.30** Would I Lie to You? Comedy panel show, hosted by Rob Brydon, in which team captains David Mitchell and Lee Mack are joined by celebrity guests to deceive their opponents with plausible lies. (R) **11.00** The Week the Landlords Moved In. A transformative series challenging some of Britain's most successful landlords to spend an eye-opening week living in one of their own rental properties. (R) **12.00** Weather for the Week Ahead. **12.05** BBC News.

BBC2

6.00 A to Z of TV Gardening. (R) **6.45** The Instant Gardener. (R) **7.30** Gardeners' World. (R) **8.30** Countryfile. (R) **9.30** Saturday Kitchen Best Bites. (R) **11.00** Wimbledon Wheelchair Finals. The men's wheelchair singles and ladies' wheelchair doubles finals. **12.30** Nigel Slater: Eating Together. (R) **1.00** Haiky Bikers' Best of British. (R) **1.45** Film: Father of the Bride Part II. (1995) Comedy sequel, starring Steve Martin. **3.25** Wanted Down Under. (R) **4.10** Meerkats: Secrets of an Animal Superstar. (R) **5.10** Songs of Praise. **5.45** Flog It! (R) **6.30** Wimbledon 2017. Sue Barker presents coverage of the mixed doubles final at the All England Club, as the successors to 2016 champions Henri Kontinen and Heather Watson are crowned on Centre Court. Finnish player Kontinen and home favourite Watson caused one of the fairytale stories of last year's event, defeating defending champions Leander Paes and Martina Hingis in the third round and eventually overcoming Robert Farah and Anna-Lena Groenefeld 7-6, 6-4 in the final. **8.00** Film: The Lone Ranger. (2013) A lawyer is left for dead after an ambush in which his Texas ranger brother is killed, but is saved by a mysterious Native American fugitive. Concealing his identity behind a mask, he and his new ally hunt down the outlaws behind the attack – only to find their actions are just part of a larger evil scheme. Western, starring Armie Hammer, Johnny Depp and Helena Bonham Carter. Edited for daytime broadcast. **10.20** Today at Wimbledon. Clare Balding and guests look back at highlights of the men's singles final at the All England Club, along with the day's other finals. **11.20** Golf: Scottish Open. Eilish Barbour presents highlights of the final round of the European Tour event at Dundonald Links in Troon, Ayrshire, where Alexander Noren entered as the defending champion. **12.20** Athletics: Diamond League Rabat Highlights. The 10th Diamond League event of the season from Morocco. **1.20** Sign Zone: Countryfile. (R) **2.15** Holy City. Jac and Fran get the shock of their lives. (R) **3.15** This is BBC Two. Preview of upcoming programmes.

ITV

6.00 CITV: Grizzly Tales for Gruesome Kids. **6.10** Grizzly Tales for Gruesome Kids. (R) **6.20** Sooty. (R) **6.30** Signed Stories: Share a Story. (R) **6.35** Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures. (R) **6.50** Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures. (R) **7.00** Oddbods. (R) **7.05** Super 4. (R) **7.20** Marvel Avengers Assemble. (R) **7.45** Thunderbirds Are Go. (R) **8.10** Ben 10. **8.25** ITV News. **8.30** Weekend. **9.25** Wild Animal Reunions. (R) **10.25** Britain's Best Walks with Julia Bradbury. (R) **10.55** Love Your Garden. (R) **11.55** ITV News: Weather. **12.10** James Martin's French Adventure. (R) **12.40** The Voice Kids Semi-Final. (R) **2.40** Bear Grylls Survival School. (R) **3.10** Film: For Your Eyes Only. (1981) James Bond spy thriller, starring Roger Moore. **5.40** Regional Programme : Weather. **5.55** ITV News: Weather. **6.10** The Celebrity Chase. Bradley Walsh presents as celebrity contestants Mike Bushell, Annabel Croft, Rhea Bailey and Rylan Clark-Neal pit their wits against ruthless quiz genius the Chaser in the hope of winning a potential prize pot worth thousands of pounds. They must work as a team and play strategically to answer general knowledge questions against the clock and race down the game board to the exit without being caught. **7.10** The Voice Kids Final. Emma Willis presents the grand final of the junior version of the singing talent contest, with the six remaining youngsters getting their final shot at stardom. Coaches Will.I.am, Danny Jones and Pixie Lott will be stepping aside, as the choice of overall winner will be decided entirely by viewers' votes. Last in the series. **9.00** The Loch. A body is pulled from the Loch, and a photograph in his wallet provides a vital clue. Albrighton continues to pursue his theory, putting his life on the line. Last in the series. **10.00** ITV News: Weather. **10.20** Judge Rinder's Crime Stories. Barrister Robert Rinder examines the cases of a boy who was kept as a slave for 13 years and a widow who trusted her son to manage her husband's estate with tragic results. (R) **11.20** Take Me Out. (R) **12.30** Jackpot247. **3.00** Motorsport UK. **3.50** ITV Nightscreen. **5.05** The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R)

CHANNEL 4

6.15 Last Man Standing. **6.40** Last Man Standing. **7.05** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **7.30** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **8.00** Fraser. (R) **8.30** Fraser. (R) **9.00** Sunday Brunch. **12.00** Formula 1 British Grand Prix Live Build-Up. Previewing the 10th round of the season. **12.35** Formula 1 British Grand Prix Live. Coverage of the 10th round of the season (Start-time 1.00pm). **3.10** Formula 1 British Grand Prix Live Reaction. A review of the 10th round of the season. **4.30** World's Most Expensive Cars. **5.35** The Restoration Man. (R) **6.30** Channel 4 News. **7.00** World Para Athletics Championships London 2017. Arthur Williams, Sophie Morgan and Lee McKenzie present coverage of the evening session on day three of the Championships, which takes place at The London Stadium in Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park. Among the finals scheduled to take place tonight are the women's T42 100m and T35 200m, as well as the men's T13 and T44 100m, the T54 1500m, and the F35 shot put. With expert analysis from Stef Reid, Danny Crates, David Weir, and Liam Malone. Coverage continues on More4. **9.30** The Handmaid's Tale. The Commander takes Offred on a surprising adventure that introduces her to one of Gilead's best-kept secrets, and Nick's troubled past leads to his being recruited by the Sons of Jacob. **10.35** 8 Out of 10 Cats Does Countdown. Jonathan Ross, Lee Mack and Victoria Coren Mitchell join regulars Jon Richardson and Jimmy Carr for the words-and-numbers game. (R) **11.35** Film: The Lincoln Lawyer. (2011) A cynical lawyer realises the rich man he is defending on a rape charge may have escaped justice for another attack in the past. Thriller, with Matthew McConaughey and Marisa Tomei. **1.45** The World's Weirdest Weather. Sunlight appears to transform water into liquid gold. (R) **2.40** The Last Leg. A light-hearted review of the World Para Athletics Championships. (R) **3.35** KOTV Boxing Weekly. **4.00** Gillette World Sport. **4.30** Mobli 1: The Grid. (R) **5.00** Location. Location. Location. Two couples house-hunt in Hastings. (R) **5.55** 3rd Rock from the Sun. (R)

CHANNEL 5

6.00 Milkshake!: Pip Ahoy! **6.10** Mr Men. (R) **6.20** Peppa Pig. (R) **6.30** Peppa Pig. (R) **6.35** Wissper. (R) **6.40** Paw Patrol. (R) **6.55** Bob the Builder. (R) **7.05** Fireman Sam. (R) **7.15** Only the Little White Van. (R) **7.20** Only the Little White Van. (R) **7.25** Paw Patrol. (R) **7.40** Blaze and the Monster Machines. (R) **8.05** Noddy: Toyland Detective. (R) **8.20** Wissper. (R) **8.35** Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom. (R) **8.50** Shimmer and Shine. (R) **9.10** Little Princess. (R) **9.25** Peppa Pig. (R) **9.35** Peppa Pig. (R) **9.45** Peppa Pig. (R) **9.55** Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom. (R) **10.05** Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. (R) **10.40** Make You Laugh Out Loud. (R) **11.05** Kittens Make You Laugh Out Loud. (R) **12.55** Cats Make You Laugh Out Loud. (R) **1.55** Film: Racing Stripes. (2004) **3.45** Film: Alvin and the Chipmunks. (2007) **5.30** FIA Formula E Live. **7.10** Cricket on 5. England v South Africa. Highlights of the third day's play in the Second Test of the four-match series, which took place at Trent Bridge in Nottingham. **8.00** That's So 1981. An entertaining reflection on the year, which saw the wedding of Lady Diana Spencer and Prince Charles draw a global record audience of 750 million people, US president Ronald Reagan and Pope John Paul II survive assassination attempts, the first Rubik's Cube world championship, The Magic Stick become the latest must-have toy and in music the emergence of the New Romantic era. (R) **8.55** 5 News Weekend. **9.00** Big Brother. Daily round-up of highlights, revealing how the housemates are getting on under the all-seeing eye of Big Brother, featuring the latest tasks, games, arguments, laugh-in, diary room visits and bedroom chat. Narrated by Marcus Bentley. **10.00** Film: 21 Jump Street. (2012) Two youthful-looking cops are sent undercover as high-school students to bring down a drugs ring. Comedy inspired by the 1980s TV series, starring Jonah Hill and Channing Tatum. Includes 5 News Update at 11pm. **11.00** 5 News Update. **11.05** Film: 21 Jump Street. (2012) Concluded. **12.15** OMG! Boy Beauty Addicts. **1.10** SuperCasino. **3.10** Little Divas: Tantrums & Tiaras. (R)

DIGITAL

BBC Four
7.00 Lucy Worsley: Mozart's London Odyssey **8.00** BBC Proms 2017 **10.00** John Denver: Country Boy **11.00** Horizon: Asteroids – The Good, the Bad and the Ugly **12.00** Dissected: The Incredible Human Hand **1.00** Britain's Whale Hunters: The Untold Story **2.00** Atlantis – The Evidence **3.00** Lucy Worsley: Mozart's London Odyssey **4.00** Close **ITV2**
11.50 Ninja Warrior UK **12.50** Film: Babe (1995) **1.55** FYI Daily **2.00** Film: Babe (1995) **2.40** The Voice Kids Semi-Final **4.40** Film: Cats & Dogs: The Revenge of Kitty Galore (2010) **5.40** FYI Daily **5.45** Film: Cats & Dogs: The Revenge of Kitty Galore (2010) **6.20** Film: The Amazing Spider-Man (2012) **7.20** FYI Daily **7.25** Film: The Amazing Spider-Man (2012) **9.00** Love Island **10.00** Love Island: Aftersun **11.05** Family Guy **12.30** American Dad! **1.25** Totally Bonkers Guinness World Records **1.55** Planet's Funniest Animals **2.15** Teleshopping **ITV3**
11.40 The Darling Buds of May **12.50** Wycliffe **1.55** Foyle's War **4.00** Agatha Christie's Marple **8.00** The Booze Cruise III **10.00** Law & Order: UK **12.00** Wire in the Blood **3.25** May the Best House Win **5.05** Rising Damp **5.30** ITV3 Nightscreen **ITV4**
11.00 Tour de France Highlights **12.00** Tour de France Live. **5.30** Pawn Stars **6.00** Fierce **7.00** Tour de France Highlights **8.00** Film: Police Academy 2: Their First Assignment (1985) **9.05** FYI Daily **9.10** Film: Police Academy 2: Their First Assignment (1985) **9.50** Film: The Glimmer Man (1996) **10.55** FYI Daily **11.00** Film: The Glimmer Man (1996) **11.40** Film: Crank (2006) **12.40** FYI Daily **12.45** Film: Crank (2006) **1.30** Tour de France Highlights **2.25** Tommy Cooper **2.50** ITV4 Nightscreen **3.00** Teleshopping **E4**
11.00 Film: Space Chimps 2: Zartog Strikes Back (2010) **12.40** Rude(ish) Tube Shorts **1.00** The Goldbergs **3.00** The Big Bang Theory **8.00** The Crystal Maze: Celebrity Special **9.00** Film: Speed (1994) **11.20** Tube Tube **12.25** Gogglebox **1.25** Tattoo Fixers **2.30** 8 Out of 10 Cats **3.10** The Goldbergs **Film4**
11.00 The Wackiest Ship in the Army (1960) **1.00** Ice Age: Dawn of the Dinosaurs (2009) **2.45** Carry On Spying (1964) **4.30** The Jewel of the Nile (1985) **6.35** Grease (1978) **9.00** Men in Black 3 (2012) **11.10** Machete Kills (2013)

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FILM CHOICES

MONDAY

Fatal Performance, Channel 5, 3.15pm

An aspiring actress, working as a waitress, is offered a lucrative contract to impersonate the wife of a businessman during a prestigious reception event in their home. However, she soon learns the devious truth behind the proposal and what seemed like a simple job soon turns into a nightmare scenario. Thriller, starring Nicholle Tom and David Palfrey. (2013)

TUESDAY

Stolen Daughter, Channel 5, 3.15pm

A detective who specialises in finding missing children is banned from the case when her own teenager is abducted. But determined to find the girl, she defies her superiors and embarks on her own investigation to save her flesh and blood before it is too late. Crime drama, starring Andrea Roth, Nicole Munoz, Steve Bacic and Matthew Kevin Anderson. (2015)

WEDNESDAY

Marriage of Lies, Channel 5, 3.15pm

A woman accused of being responsible for her husband's disappearance begins to uncover many secrets about the man she married while attempting to prove her innocence. Mystery drama, starring Virginia Williams. (2016)



Legally Blonde, Friday, Channel 5, 7.55pm

THURSDAY

Kidnapped: Desperate Hours, Channel 5, 3.15pm

An American wife's world is turned upside down when her husband, the son of a Mexican newspaper publisher, is kidnapped. Drama, starring Teri Polo, Esal Morales, Nicholas Gonzalez, Olivia dAbo, William R Moses and Danny Mora. (2011)

FRIDAY

Legally Blonde, Channel 5, 7.55pm

A seemingly dizzy teenager is heartbroken when her boyfriend dumps her because he thinks she is not intelligent enough to help his political career. To prove him wrong she enrolls at Harvard, but finds herself out of her depth as other students do their best to humiliate her. Comedy, starring Reese Witherspoon, Luke Wilson, Selma Blair, Matthew Davis, Victor Garber, Jennifer Coolidge, Holland Taylor and Raquel Welch. (2001)

Uncovering a different side to the beautiful game

In 1914, as a generation of young men signed up to serve king and country, so too did the women who were left behind, as hundreds of thousands took on traditional male roles previously considered too dangerous for women.

The most familiar image of these was the munitions girl, and as the female workers formed strong bonds on the factory floor, their friendships spilled over onto the playing fields during their breaks.

Informal kickabouts became a popular pastime, and they were encouraged by the factory management who deemed them good for health, well-being and moral.

As the war progressed, so did the women's game, and football teams emerged from the munitions factories.

Initially, the novelty of women playing football was used to raise money for war charities, with crowds flocking to see the so-called 'munitionettes' take on teams of injured soldiers and women from other towns and villages.

The most famous of the wartime teams was Dick, Kerr Ladies FC from Preston. Founded in 1917, their first match drew a crowd of 10,000, and by 1920, a Boxing Day match against St Helen's Ladies was watched by 53,000 spectators at Goodison Park, with another 14,000 locked outside the ground trying to get in.

However, this so-called 'golden era' of women's football was to be short-lived.

As the men arrived back from the front to take up their old jobs, women were expected to return to domestic life.

Then on December 5, 1921, the Football Association published a report that offered three key reasons why women's football matches should henceforth be banned from taking place on their pitches.

Firstly, it said that football was "quite unsuitable for females."

Secondly, there were complaints about "the conditions under which some of these matches have been arranged and played."

And finally, the council suggested that "an excessive proportion of the receipts are absorbed in expenses and an inadequate percentage devoted to charitable objects."

As a result the FA called on clubs belonging to the associations "to refuse the use of their grounds for such matches", and the subsequent ban changed the course of the women's game forever.

It wasn't until 1971 that the FA finally lifted the ban, in the same year UEFA that recommended the women's game should be taken under the control of the national associations in each country.

This move signalled the start of a female football revival, not only in Britain but around the world.

In this documentary, Clare Balding investigates why it has taken the current generation 46 years to achieve something remotely close to the success of the First World War footballers.

She also asks why there continues to be a massive gap between women's and men's football.



When Football Banned Women, Tuesday, Channel 4, 10pm

BEST OF THE REST

The Sweet Makers: A Tudor Treat

BBC2, 8pm

Many of us have a sweet tooth, and can't get enough of sugary treats. This is not, however, a modern phenomenon, as this new, three-part series reveals. Chocolatiers Diana Short and Paul

A Young, sweet consultant Andy Baxendale and wedding cake designer Cynthia Stroud are taking a trip back in time to find out what life and work was like for their Tudor predecessors. They learn how the nation's love of sweets developed, and how the tables of the aristocracy boasted fantastic displays of sugar craft, which showed off their owners' wealth and status. The quartet will also spend four days using original recipes, ingredients and equipment to create dishes that haven't been made, let alone tasted, for hundreds of years.



The Sweet Makers: A Tudor Treat, Wednesday, BBC2, 8pm

THURSDAY

RHS: Tatton Flower Show 2017

BBC2, 7.30pm

Monty Don and Joe Swift present the first of two visits to the horticultural event in Cheshire, with the help of Carol Klein, Toby Buckland and Arit Anderson. The team explores the diverse range of show gardens, including the designs for the compact 'back-to-backs', and Monty celebrates the next generation of planters and landscapers. Carol shares her guide to getting the best out of hydrangeas and Joe quizzes champion growers in the hope they will give up some of their fruit and vegetable-producing secrets.

FRIDAY

Golf: The Open Championship

BBC2, 8pm

Ellidh Barbour present highlights of the second day of the prestigious event, which takes place at Royal Birkdale Golf Club in Southport. Today's play will have seen the competitors attempting to make the cut and qualify for the weekend's rounds, and avoid the fate that befell several notable players at last year's event, including Ernie Els, Tommy Fleetwood, Paul Casey and Louis Oosthuizen. Fleetwood, who is from Southport, will be looking to perform well.

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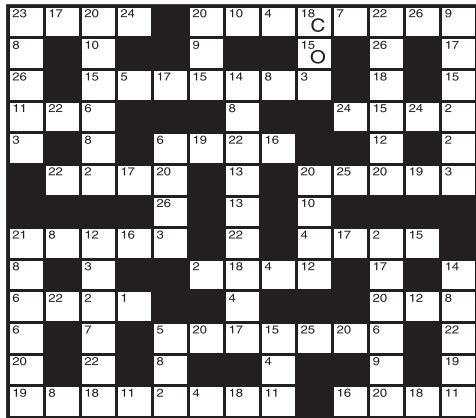
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BRAIN GYM

No.438

Codeword

Each number in the grid represents a different letter of the alphabet and every letter of the alphabet is used. Use the given letter(s) to the right of the main grid to start you off.



LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION:

1	N	P	O	M	C	R	F	K	V	Y	Z	A	I
14	E	W	H	S	G	L	J	X	U	T	B	D	Q

Double Crossword

Choose either quick or cryptic clues - both

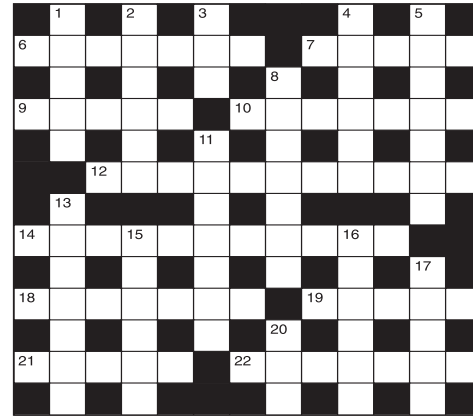
Cryptic Clues:

Across

6. Give support to the wrong seer (7)
7. Somehow trust a prop (5)
9. Keep away from a chasm (5)
10. Feel affection for everybody when there's no score (4-3)
12. Instructed lower classes? (5,6)
14. In good health when leaving, and certainly rich (4,4,3)
18. A friend takes Vera out for a long conference (7)
19. It's meant to be boring when the doctor is unwell (5)
21. Purloined lady's wrap (5)
22. The limitation of the player who may substitute? (7)

Down

1. Serious place to end up! (5)
2. Put little work into wrong choice (6)
3. Permitted to have a tenant (3)
4. Go there to finish an abstainer (6)
5. Try clue for knives, forks, etc. (7)
8. Loco men adapted eyeglass (7)
11. Allowed, indeed to be expunged (7)
13. A ten-play forfeiture (7)
15. Youth leader is in good time every twelve months (6)
16. Dishonest blacksmith? (6)
17. A fitting standard of comparison (5)
20. Crave letter, for example (3)



Quick Clues:

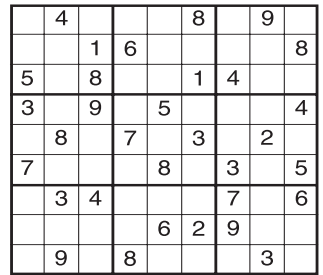
Across

6. Extract (7)
7. Female fox (5)
9. Sum (5)
10. Solidify (7)
12. Unconcerned (11)
14. Basic (11)
18. Rapture (7)
19. Frighten (5)
21. Stop (5)
22. Flourish (7)

Down

1. Laud (5)
2. Keep (6)
3. Copy (3)
4. Digit (6)
5. Residue (7)
8. Limit (7)
11. Send away (7)
13. Expedite (7)
15. Hate (6)
16. Confront (6)
17. Avidity (5)
20. Arid (3)

Sudoku



Fill in the grid above so that every row and every column, every 3x3 boxes contains all the digits from 1 to 9.

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS >

1	9	7	6	2	5	3	8	4
8	4	2	1	3	7	6	5	9
3	6	5	8	4	9	2	1	7
5	3	6	7	8	1	4	9	2
9	1	8	2	6	4	5	7	3
2	7	4	5	9	3	8	6	1
6	8	1	3	7	2	9	4	5
4	5	3	9	1	8	7	2	6
7	2	9	4	5	6	1	3	8

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS:
 CRYPTIC - Across: 1 Mastermind; 7 Metre; 8 Dresses; 10 Off-drive; 11 Miss; 13 In line; 15 Andrew; 17 Ivan; 18 Salesmen; 21 Nodding; 22 Outdo; 23 Crowd scene. Down: 1 Motif; 2 Steering; 3 Endive; 4 Meet; 5 Nastier; 6 Imposition; 9 Sash window; 12 Antelope; 14 Leander; 16 Barges; 19 Mitre; 20 View.
 QUICK - Across: 1 Suspension; 7 Aroma; 8 Traffic; 10 Familiar; 11 Dawn; 13 Sorrow; 15 Middle; 17 Else; 18 Gather in; 21 Portion; 22 Risen; 23 Lead the way. Down: 1 Storm; 2 Stallion; 3 Entrap; 4 Slap; 5 Offhand; 6 Half-asleep; 9 Concerning; 12 Withdraw; 14 Reserve; 16 Launch; 19 Risky; 20 Kind.

Quiz

1. What type of animal is a prairie dog?
2. How are birds of the order Strigiformes known?
3. Which prime minister adopted the three-day week policy?
4. Of which US river is the Red River a tributary?
5. What is the capital of Paraguay?
6. By which judicial procedure may a US president be brought to trial?
7. Who wrote The Naked Lunch in 1959?
8. Which two countries comprise Iberia?
9. To which family of fishes does the burbot belong?
10. In Greek mythology, who was the father of Icarus?

Last week's solutions:

Quiz: 1 South Western Townships; 2 South Pole; 3 Hyena; 4 Prussian; 5 Michael Palin; 6 Painting; 7 Berlin; 8 Music; 9 Swallowing; 10 New Zealand.
 Niner: FURTIVELY

Niner

Each number from 1 to 9 represents a different letter. Solve the clues and insert the letters in the appropriate squares to discover a word which uses all nine letters.

35428
 671123
 958623

gives a bird,
 gives a second bird,
 gives a male bird.

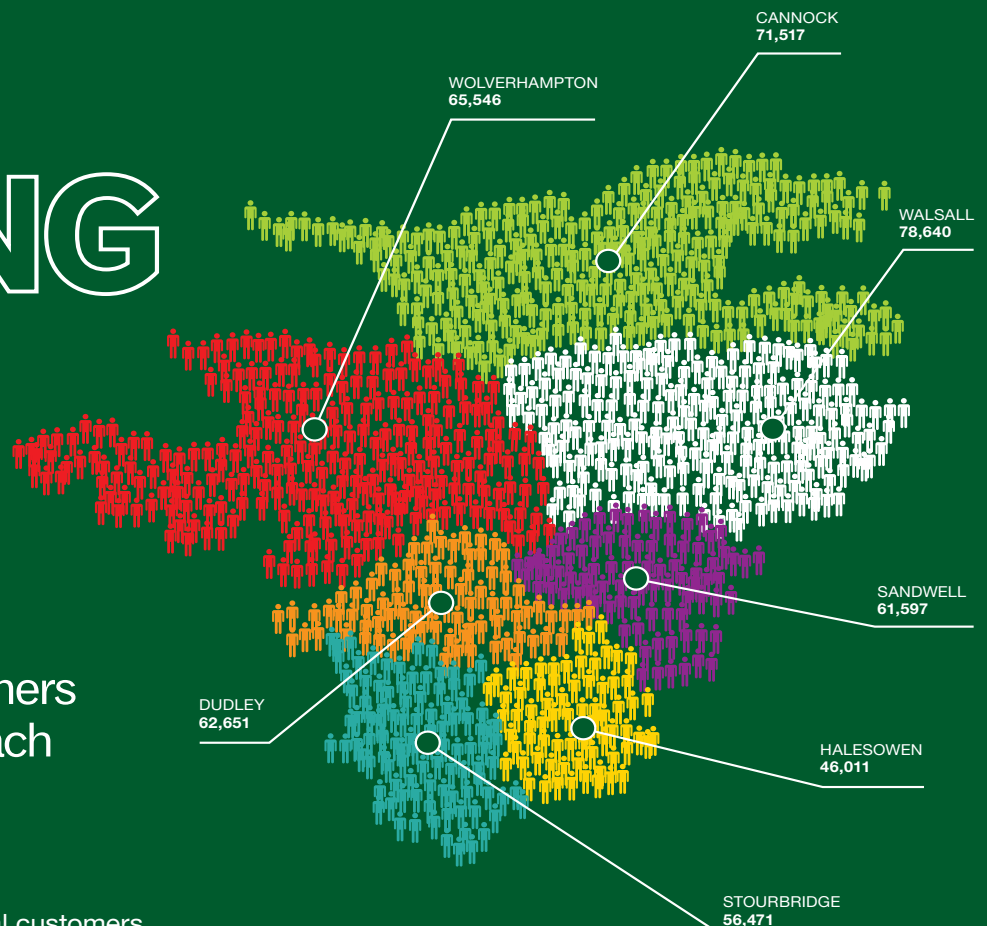
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
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Take it oh so-slow in eco-edden

SURROUNDED by fjords, forests and fields, Oslo is an urban metropolis wrapped in nature.

The Green Party are in power as part of a local coalition government, pushing through initiatives such as a car-free city centre, improvements in cycle highways and public buses powered by biofuel – and it's even been named Green Capital of the World for 2019.

If you're on a mission to go green in Norway's eco Eden, check out Loseter City Farm and Bakehouse.

Straining their iron necks far beyond the steel skyline, a chain of cranes is a reminder of the building work under way in Oslo's Bjorvika bay area. A new Munch museum, opera house and library are all on the cards for 2020. But amidst the tangle of disused train tracks and dual carriageways is a scene more idyllic than industrial, with BMWs and Audis occupying the same vista as a horse and cart.

Oslo's urban farm sits below two iconic concrete towers on the edge of the city, where roads are superseded by swathes of pine forest.

As part of the Future Farmers art project helmed by American Amy Franceschini, 100 growing boxes were given to the community and a city farmer was employed to help people learn how to grow (he's on site every Wednesday). "Growing and empathy with nature can help the decision-making process," says project organiser Anne Beate Hovind.

A Bakehouse designed to resemble the hull of a Viking ship has rescued ancient grains, providing a space for community baking sessions, and there are plans to introduce a pig and hens – one day. For more information, go to www.loseter.no/en

Also worth checking out is Restaurant Kontrast. No-one likes waste, especially at the dinner table. But there's no risk of leaving any forlorn morsels trailing the

Oslo's opera house, in the Bjorvika area



The bay of Oslo, Green Capital of the World for 2019



rims of plates at this one Michelin star restaurant, tucked discreetly below an arcade in the city's trendy Vulkan district. Even the distance travelled by ingredients is carefully monitored; 80 per cent of the menu is sourced from within an hour of Oslo.

As a result, the six or ten course tasting menu (from £88/950 NOK-£135/1450 NOK) is a tour of Norway's finest farms; dishes might include scallops from the island of Froya, or skrei, a spawning cod swimming in the waters around Lofoten. Chef Mikael Svensson's menu makes use of everything available in the larder –

so if a pork shoulder slow-cooked for 36 hours appears as a main meat dish, don't be surprised to taste pig lard buttered on sides of bread.

Tongues, brains, stems and stalks all have their place, making Kontrast even more innovative than Oslo's high-flying crop of forward-thinking restaurants. If you're teetotal, or want a night off the sauce, try the juice flight of cold teas, fruits and herb infusions. Visit www.restaurant-kontrast.no

Another attraction is the Scandic Vulkan Hotel. Hotels by their very nature aren't especially eco-friendly, but

Scandic Vulkan is attempting to make commendable amends by employing green gadgetry, such as solar cells and running on geothermal energy.

This was the first hotel in Norway to be given an official Class A energy rating, meaning it uses resources extremely efficiently. Each of the 149 rooms features a recycling bin for plastics and paper, and bicycles can be borrowed for free to explore the local area. Rooms from £93 (1000 NOK) per night with breakfast. Visit www.scandichotels.com

By Sarah Marshall

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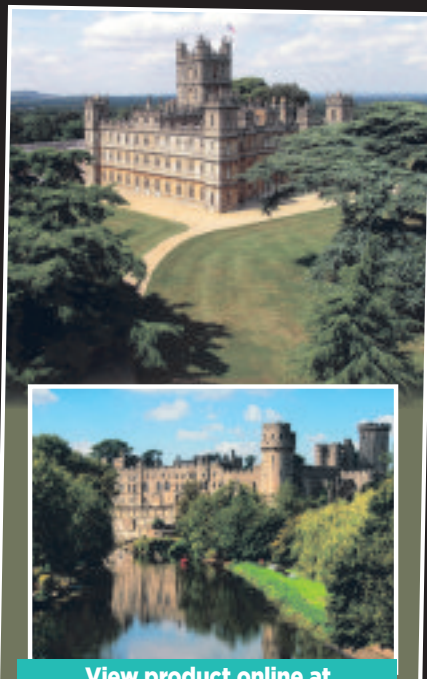
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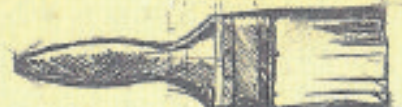
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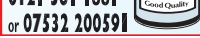
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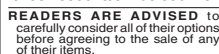
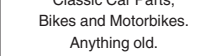
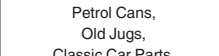
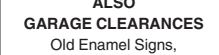
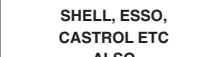
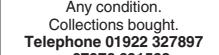
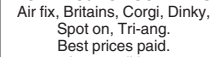
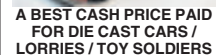
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9
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By James Parker

"We worked with the RSPCA on the Dogs Die in Hot Cars campaign to help convey a positive message around what is a difficult



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The new Škoda Octavia features six engines, two body styles and seven familiar

For more information on the RSPCA's Dogs Die in Hot Cars campaign visit www.rspca.org.uk

A photograph showing the front three-quarters view of two Mazda3 sedans. The car on the left is blue, and the car on the right is red. Both cars have their headlights on, and the red car's fog lights are also illuminated. They are parked on a light-colored surface.

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Off on his paddles – Jamie tests the water as he sets out in his boat from Gailey Canoe Club



Reporter Jamie Brassington is shown how to use a paddle by coach Nigel Hargrave



Jamie is shown how to get into a canoe correctly



Junior members look on from the towpath at Croft Lane

Oar-some feeling as Jamie takes to water

SPORTING FEATURE

By Jamie Brassington

"It helps get you fit, but there is also the social side where you get to meet new people and make friends."

THE fear of falling into the water – that is the hardest part to get over when you first learn to canoe.

Especially if that water is a canal.

I stepped into the kayak carefully following the pattern of movements my instructor told me to, before sliding into the seat.

That was the first obstacle I had overcome. Now I had to stay upright for the next hour or so to remain dry.

I was paddling in a yellow play boat. The kayak, a type of canoe, was specifically made so it was hard to topple – much to my relief – but the down side is that it spun you a lot in circles.

So that is what I did for most of the remainder of the session – spin around – at Gailey Canoe Club based in Penkridge.

Newcomer

But it was good fun. The warm sun beat down on us as we paddled on the water. The setting, a section of canal cutting through the countryside, was picturesque and idyllic.

Being a newcomer to this sport, I was guided by the instructors to gain my confidence in the water for this first session, which meant gently paddling around in a small section of the lake and not travelling very far.

The more experienced members of the club, some of whom take part in serious racing, speed off into the distance for an eight-mile circuit.

I was what the canoe club is looking for – a new re-



Young club members take to the water

cruit. They are on the lookout for additional members to join their ranks.

Canoeing offers a variety of benefits, says Louise Clive, who runs the club alongside her husband John. "It helps get you fit, but there is also the social side where you get to meet new people and make friends," she said.

"Especially for the kids, it gets them out of the house, away from their games consoles.

"And it is a great outdoor setting. You get to experience the countryside and see the wildlife."

Another positive aspect of the sport is that it open and accessible to all ages – the club's youngest member is eight and the oldest 76.

The club trains on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Sundays. It has around 60 members from children to adults. Some take part in canoeing at a leisurely level.

But the club competes professionally and has up to 15 paddlers who race for them.

Gailey compete in a Midlands division and currently have their eyes set on qualifying for an annual national competition, held later this year.

The top six teams from regional leagues around Great Britain qualify for the annual tournament. And Gailey look on course to succeed.

They have one race left to go and are currently fifth

in the league. There are different types of canoes that can be used. Some are designed for racing, which are more stream-lined and offer two seats, while others are more user friendly, catering for a range of abilities.

I was in a canoe of that latter category, on the Staffordshire and Worcestershire canal, outside the Croft Lane-based club.

As a newcomer, I found it challenging getting to grips with the paddle.

The paddle is used in a figure of eight motion to steer and move. But every time I made a jerky movement and struck the surface hard, I felt like I was going off balance and would tip into the water.

Luckily that didn't happen, although I had a few wobbly moments.

A second session on another day would see me travel a greater distance as I build up my skill and confidence, it was said.

That is how instructors at Gailey teach you from the beginning. "You build up to travelling two miles, then four miles, and then eight miles," said Louise.

Tiresome

Racing at these distances is tiresome work and tests the competitors' endurance. But Gailey are among the best in the country at this.

Despite being a small club, they have produced paddlers who have competed at international level, with some going on to be world champions.

The Gailey club has been in operation since the 1950s, and for the last three decades have been based at their current site.

A revamp of their clubhouse is under way, thanks to backing from the Canal and River Trust. The charity has given Gailey a £1,000 grant, which will pay for new showers. The club currently has a social function room and changing rooms are also planning to install new toilet facilities.

The revamp was forged as part of the deal with the charity, which saw Gailey tasked with the upkeep of the club building and the canal which runs outside their club, from Gravely Way Bridge Number 78 to Gailey Bridge Number 79.

For more information on Gailey Canoe Club, visit www.gaileycoc.co.uk or call Louise Clive on 07816 786987 or via email on l.clive@gaillecc.co.uk

Tennis investment is net gain for players

TENNIS players have been boosted by one of the biggest grassroots investments in the sport. Transforming British Tennis Together aims to make courts more useable and accessible to everyone over the next ten years.

The Lawn Tennis Association has committed to investing £125 million to improve community facilities across the country, and plans to unlock a further £125 million through match funding from community networks.

The body aims to deliver 1,500 newly covered indoor courts, over 8,000 newly floodlit courts and nearly 3,000 court entry systems across the country over the next decade. Claire Brown, LTA Head of Midland Region said: "This is an amazing and transformational opportunity for tennis in the Midlands. More and more people are enjoying the sport and there is a real appetite for the improvement and regeneration of local courts."

The LTA is asking tennis clubs, parks, local government, volunteers, coaches and businesses to register their interest in bidding for the funds to transform their local courts. Visit www.lta.org.uk/TBTT

Hole disappointment for golfers' Open bid

THERE was disappointment for a host of regional golfers in their attempt to qualify for The Open.

With just three going through from the five final qualifying venues, South Staffordshire Golf Club veteran Peter Baker, a former Ryder Cup ace, finished tied 34th at Hillside.

Baker, of Wolverhampton, a three-time European Tour winner, finished four over par, while Enville's Jacob McGoldrick was 15 over at the same venue. Robert Burlison, also of Enville, finished 13 over par at Royal Cinque Ports.

Walsall's Henry Sheridan-Mills shot one over par at Woburn and Armitage's Robert Rock retired after 12 holes of his second round at Notts Hol-linwell.

As the reigning Senior Open champion, Walsall-born Paul Broadhurst has already qualified for the 146th Open, which gets under way at Royal Birkdale, Merseyside, next Thursday, July 20.

Busy week of action sees BCT medal haul

BLACK Country Triathletes came home with several medals on a weekend of action. In a sprint at Upton-on-Severn on Saturday – a 750m river swim, a 20km bike and a 5km run – Lauren Evans was first female home, Reece Ashfield was third male overall and Oliver Evans first in 15-16 group.

In the standard distance race involving a 1500m river swim, 40km ride and a 10k run, Thomas Dauncey was first home for BCT in 2:20:50 and first in the 25-29 age group. For the ladies Sue Payton and Ersuline Whittle were second and third in the 55-59 age group.

Junior girls raced on Saturday at Shipton on Stour Aquathlon with Alex Westbury, Abbie Kennard and Abi Hathaway taking first, third and fourth respectively at TS2. Paul Rogers, Chris Pedley and Leighann Adams took part in the Wenlock Olympian Triathlon with a 500m pool swim, 19km ride and a 7km run. Rogers was second overall and Pedley second at age group.

Samantha Paine had a PB in a Women Only Standard Distance – a 1500m open water swim, 42.4km ride and a 10km run – at Eton Dorney.



SPORTS DESK 01902 319531

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McCone is back with Glassboys

CENTRAL defender Paul McCone has re-signed for Stourbridge from AFC Telford United with the 25-year old returning to the War Memorial Ground for a fourth spell with the Glassboys.

McCone originally joined the club in the summer of 2010, following his release from Wolverhampton Wanderers. He enjoyed three outstanding seasons with the club, most notably scoring the opening goal in the FA Cup First Round replay win over Plymouth Argyle in November 2011.

McCone left in the summer of 2013 to sign for newly-promoted Leamington in Conference North, but returned briefly in October of the same year to make a couple more appearances for Stourbridge before joining another Conference North outfit, Hednesford Town, helping them to reach the 2013-14 play-offs.

He began 2014/15 at Hednesford but re-joined Stourbridge in October 2014 for a third stint, only to switch back to Hednesford two months later.

McCone then followed the Pitmen's managerial team of Rob Smith and Larry Chambers to Telford early in the 2015/16 season but an impressive start with the Bucks was halted by a serious knee injury which ruled him out of the rest of that season.

A long battle back to fitness ensued, but he successfully regained his place in the Telford set-up last term and was a vital part of the squad that retained its place in National League North.

In all, McCone has made 169 appearances for Stourbridge during his past spells, scoring 14 goals.

Darts stars on the oche for city venue world ranking event

BDO world champion Glen Durrant leads the field as Wolverhampton hosts its first big darts world ranking event this weekend.

Many local players have also signed up for the chance of a slice of the £10,000 prize pot at Wolverhampton Indoor Sports and Activities Centre in Racecourse Road.

Players in the Wolverhampton Classic and Wolverhampton Open will be joined by up to 40 disabled players in their own tournament at the same venue.

The two-day back-to-back ranking tournaments are being staged on Saturday and Sunday, July 15 and Sunday, July 16. Organisers say it will be the biggest darts event hosted at the venue, with up to 200 players, and free entry for spectators.

Joining Durrant will be Tipton's Jamie Hughes as well as past world champions, including Ted Hankey and Scott Waites. Arena manager Dharam Jagpal said: "It will be a golden opportunity for local darts enthusiasts to see the cream of BDO world darts stars in action."

Firsts spun out but women make mark

HALESOWEN'S recent run of victories came to an end at Worcestershire rivals Pershore who reached 217-7 after winning the toss and electing to bat.

Solid contributions from Liam Ridings (49), Adam Wiffen (43) and Chris Ridings (42 not out) were overshadowed by a belligerent unbeaten 49 from 20 balls from Charlie Norton for Pershore while Masharraf Shazad took 3-57 for Halesowen.

In reply, Halesowen crashed to 136 all out, unable to fathom the mysteries of spinner Matt Brace, who finished with 7-28. The 2nd XI played

out a losing draw with Brockhampton whose upper order put the Halesowen attack to the sword. Captain Max Porter and James Mockler both hit tons as Brock racked up 286 all out in 50 overs.

Halesowen could only muster 166-6 in reply with Thomas Williams (50) and Kester Moseley (45) ensuring the draw.

The 3rd XI racked up a massive 297-8 thanks to Naim Luhar (90) Mark Hutchinson (64) and John Aston (38) before Alex Jordan's 3-51 knocked over Kidderminster for 210 to win by 87 runs.

The 4th XI were defeated by Five Ways Old Edwardians who chased down Halesowen's 123 all out. However the club made history in the process when Hampshire's Chloe Micklethwaite and former Netherlands all-rounder Hannah Hofman became the first two females to play in the same team for Halesowen who are looking to build a women's team over the coming months.

They followed in the footsteps of Australia's Sarah Aley who is currently playing in the Women's World Cup who played for Halesowen in the 2007 season.

World Cup legacy is pitch perfect

A NEW artificial grass pitch is being installed at Stourbridge Rugby Club as part of the RFU's Rugby 365 initiative.

The World Cup 2015 legacy project aims to deliver 100 artificial pitches over four years in an investment of more than £50m.

The new facility at the Bridgnorth Road ground will provide year-round rugby. The floodlit surface will also enable additional training sessions and more flexibility in playing times. The site should be open for booking by August 19.

Stourbridge RFC chairman Robin Edwards said: "We are delighted to be working with the RFU and to have been selected to host their artificial grass pitch. We believe it will prove to be an excellent facility, which will enhance the local playing experience and provide a reliable surface that should encourage open running rugby."

"The opportunity to use a pitch frequently without the usual concerns about extensive maintenance is a novelty we are keen to experience. We hope to attract players of all ages and abilities from across the community to enjoy playing rugby on this new surface."

Steve Grainger, RFU rugby development director, said: "Since launching our first sites in January we have seen local clubs, schools and teams all embracing the opportunity to play on the world-class facilities without weather, darkness or lack of pitch access limiting their ability to enjoy this great game."

TANK UP AND READY TO GO

RYAN Aston is adamant he has become a new and improved fighter since being stopped in two title fights last year.

The 26-year-old will appear on BCB Promotions' 'Sunday Best' show at the Copthorne Hotel, Dudley, on July 23.

And 'Tank' said he had redeveloped himself as he continues to search for the elusive Midlands Area Title.

He said: "This is a new me now. I have changed the way I go about things. It is a case of staying relaxed and keeping my eye on the target. I want to keep disciplined and stick to the game plan."

"I am focusing more on my defence now and keeping that all nice and compact. I want to throw punches that leave me with minimum risk and have maximum effect when they land. That is boxing in a nutshell."

"I don't mind when I get another title fight. I have been there before and I know what it is all about and this is just about getting back to the level I was before."

Difficult

"I have had some difficult times in my last title fights and I have had my reasons for the losses but that is boxing, it is a great sport but a cruel business. It is what it is and hopefully now I am a different fighter I can get the victory if I do get another chance at a belt."

"I just want to fight and stick to the process that we have been working on for around three months now. I can feel it paying off. I can see little improvements in my whole boxing game."

"I am coming to the ring with a plan now. Every time I get in the gym and I am sparring I am focused on the plan and this process will not stop until I get to where I need to."

The southpaw has fought in four title fights in his career and has been unsuccessful in each of them. But he has never given up.

Tickets are priced at £35 for standard unreserved tickets or £60 ringside to include a two-course Sunday lunch. Call (01384) 482 882.

No limits to racers' fightback



Wright, left, and Siviter were pleased to fight back and claim second in class

COMPLICATED tyre choices nearly cost Black Country racers dear during round four of the No Limits endurance series at Anglesey.

But the Double Two Racing duo of Pete Wright, of Tividale and Blackheath's Martyn Siviter managed to salvage the race and retain top spot in the Club 600 championship.

With overnight storms abandoning qualifying sessions for round four, starting positions on the grid were determined by a draw out the hat - and the team picked out a lowly slot of 24.

They deduced to start the race with a wet front and slick rear on Siviter's bike. But Siviter was pretty much last after a few laps and was even lapped by the team's chief rivals in class, who were on full wets. About 20 minutes

into the 500km race, there was a dramatic change in Siviter's times. With riders on wets falling apart in drying conditions, the team moved up into the top 20 and seventh in class.

Siviter climbed up to second in class and sixth overall as the other teams made multiple pit stops, but then problems with Wright's visor followed. After nearly an hour, he signalled he was coming in and after another great pit stop the duo managed to maintain second in class.

Then, Siviter was deemed to have passed a rider under a yellow flag and was called in for a one-minute stop/go penalty. With a win out of reach, they brought the bikes home second in class, fourth in the National 600 class, eighth overall, but with a 16-point championship lead.

Rugby player tries out for Philippines

AN Old Swinford Hospital pupil has been called up to represent the Philippines in an under-20 tournament.

Year 12 pupil James Halasan Ryan is one of a 17-man squad called up for the U20 Asia Rugby Sevens Championships.

The Philippines will be competing against the likes of Japan, Hong Kong, Korea and Sri Lanka.

The tournament will be played at Kings Park, Hong Kong on August 5 and 6 and players have been selected to attend an official training camp on Saturday July 29 at the Southern Plains High Performance Facility in Calamba, Laguna.

The Chronicle, a Midland News Association Ltd publication, printed by the company at Ketley, Telford. Thursday, July 13, 2017

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